Lindy's SPORTS
AMERICA'S LEADING FOOTBALL AUTHORITY

247Sports.com RECRUITING INFO
LINDY'S HAS THE BEST AND MOST
ACC POSITION RANKINGS

ATLANTIC COAST

2015 PREVIEW

COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYOFF

Are we ready for 8? (P.12)

PETRINO UNLEASHES NASTY D ON THE ACC

NATIONAL VIEW

COACHES ON THE HOT SEAT

TOP 12 GAMES

TOP 10 HEISMAN LIST

TOP 5 NFL PROSPECTS BY POSITION

THE OFFENSIVE EXPLOSION

(P.16)

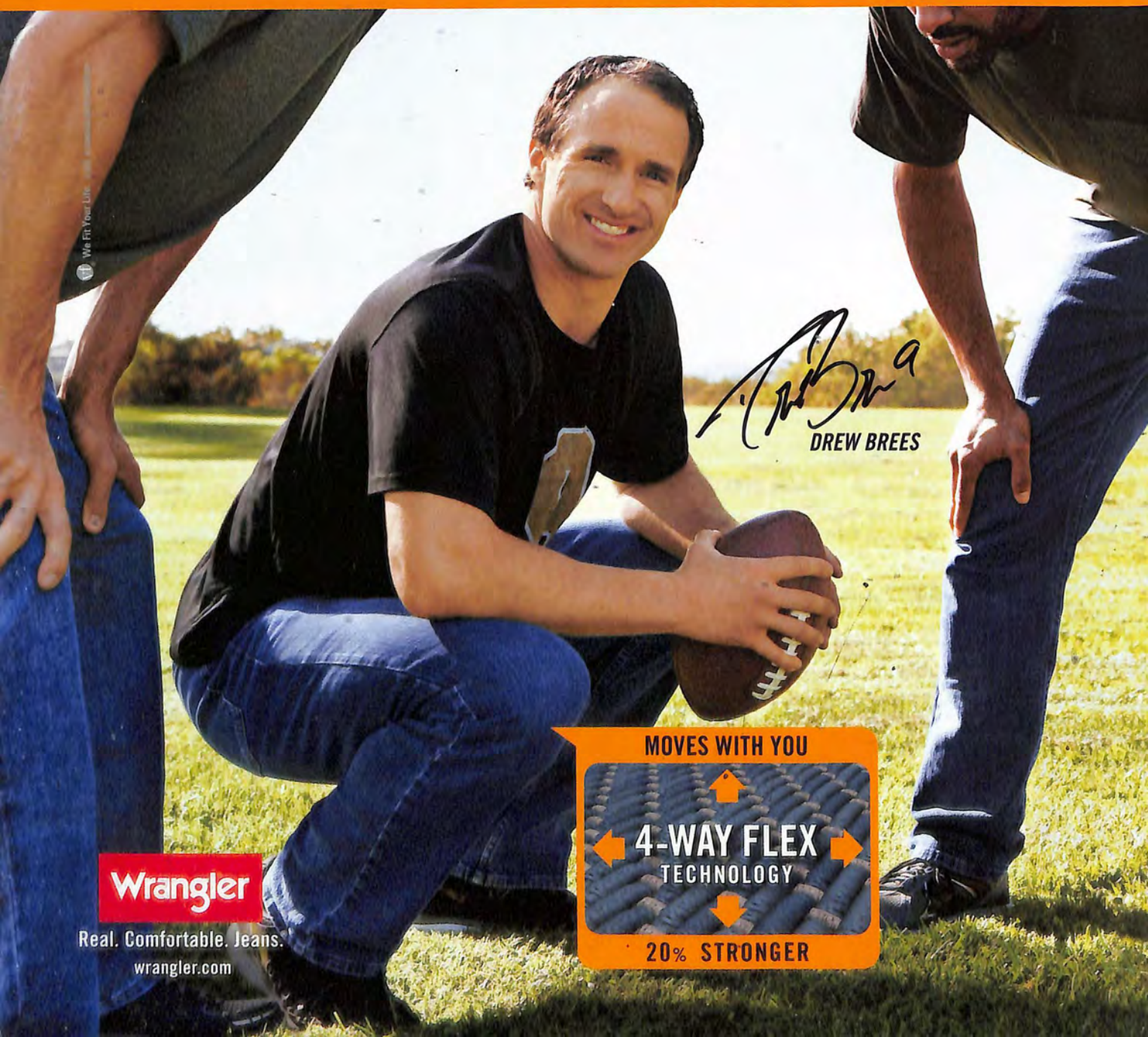
VOLUME 27 • LINDY'S ATLANTIC COAST FOOTBALL • 2015
LINDYSSPORTS.COM

www.lindyssports.com
51
0 71486 01367 9
$7.99 US
Display Until Sept. 10, 2015

Wrangler

ADVANCED COMFORT™

THE MOST COMFORTABLE JEANS YOU'LL EVER WEAR. GUARANTEED.



CONTENTS 2015

THE NATION

Urbanites Expect to Keep on Soaring 6
Ranking all 128 teams

***Lindy's* All-America Teams** 22
Boykin Fits TCU Offense to a T.
Joey Bosa Shrugs Everything Off.

***Lindy's* All-America Checklist** 26
Player ratings and top position groups

Scoping the Nation 38
Playoff teams, coaching changes, Heisman hopefuls and comeback kids

Sidelines 49

National Schedules 62

FEATURES

Double Our Pleasure | By Dennis Dodd 12
No need to wait. Expand the Playoff to Eight Teams Now.

High Fliers | By Dennis Dodd 16
Potent Offenses Balance Run and Pass.

A Fuller Life | By Mike Barber 82
NFL-playing brothers help make Hokies' Kendall Fuller the family's best prospect.

Ready for Launch | By Brad Senkiw 84
Clemson QB Deshaun Watson overcoming adversity on the road to stardom.

Keeping the Faith | By Lyn Scarbrough 175
Sherri Graves Smith – Courage, Sportsmanship and Faith

THE ACC

Picking the ACC 68

Around the ACC 74

Rating the ACC by Position 76

Year in Review 78

2014 ACC Leaders 80

A Look Back 176

RECRUITING

National Recruiting | By 247Sports 54
Breaking down the Top 25

ACC Recruiting | By 247Sports 65
Seminoles, Tigers Just Keep Adding Blue-Chippers.

NATIONAL PICKS 6
Buckeyes aim for another title.

PLAYER RATINGS 22
Outstanding offensive and defensive stars are everywhere.

SCOPING THE NATION 38
Looking at coaches, teams and players for the 2015 season.

"About the only thing I'd rather do than play basketball is hunt. There's just nothing like enjoying the great outdoors with my friends and family. Plus the challenge posed by the superior senses of your game. I grew up hunting in Louisiana, and I think it's a tradition we should pass on." **I'm The NRA.**

Karl "The Mailman" Malone
Legendary power forward for the Utah Jazz and Los Angeles Lakers, NBA's 2nd all-time scorer and Most Valuable Player '98-'99, fisherman, hunter, cattle rancher.

© 2012 National Rifle Association of America • 11250 Waples Mill Road • Fairfax, VA 22030

Did You Know ... "Intense nationwide demand for youth firearms education and safety training is why the NRA works with groups like the Boy Scouts of America, American Legion, 4-H and FFA to develop shooting programs that reach more than one million young people annually."

To join call 1.877.NRA.2000 or visit www.nra.org

Wayne LaPierre, NRA Executive Vice President

CONTENTS 2015

THE TEAMS

Appalachian State 170
Boston College 86
Clemson 92
Charlotte 171
Duke 98
East Carolina 172
Florida State 104
Georgia Tech 110
Louisville 116
Marshall 173
Miami 122
North Carolina 128
NC State 134
Old Dominion 174
Pittsburgh 140
Syracuse 146
Virginia 152
Virginia Tech 158
Wake Forest 164

TWICE THE FUN 12
Go ahead and make it an eight-team playoff.

BALANCING ACT 16
Great offensive teams can run and throw.

NATIONAL UNIT RATINGS 34
Here are the teams with the best offensive and defensive groups.

Letter from the Publisher

The first year of the College Football Playoff is now in the books ... and what a rousing success it was! Record ratings and great national interest. How long will we stay with a four-team format? Dennis Dodd makes the case for eight teams beginning on page 12.

Can the Buckeyes repeat? They enter the season as the prohibitive favorite with a lot of momentum, great coaching and possibly three quarterbacks from which to choose. *Lindy's* ranks all the teams beginning on page 6.

We have changed the design of our team previews and added some information that I think you will like.

As always, your comments and suggestions are appreciated.
Have a great season!

Sincerely,

Lindy Davis Jr.

Lindy Davis

D.M.D. Publications, Inc.
2100 Centennial Drive, Suite 100
Birmingham AL 35216
P: 205-871-1182 · F: 205-871-1184
E-mail: lindy@lindyssports.com
www.lindyssports.com

Alliance for Audited Media
The New Audit Bureau of Circulations

© 2015 D.M.D. Publications, Inc.
All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A.

Check out *LINDY'S* Sports App for your iPone, iPad and android.
Now you can enjoy several of your favorite
***Lindy's* magazines digitally!**

"like" us on facebook
follow us on twitter

Publisher
J. Lindy Davis, Jr.

Senior Editor
Anthony Gimino

Associate Editors
Don Borst, Shawn O'Neal

Production Manager
Norbert Feliciano

Web Producer
Michele Schmidt

Creative
Tracey Fagan, Norbert Feliciano
Ginny O'Neill, Tim Williams

Photo Editor
R.D. Moore

Editorial/Production Assistants
Mike Chesnick, Ben Cook, Janet Ehle, Geoff Grammer, John Krusinski, Jody Little, Matt Lowe, Deb Naramore, Carol Reece, Kathy Rombough, Lyn Scarbrough, Michele Schmidt, Christopher Wuensch

Advertising/Marketing
Southeast
Lyn Scarbrough · Birmingham
205-437-9483

Northeast - Mid-Atlantic
Fox Associates
adinfo.ldy@foxrep.com
212-725-2106

West Coast
Fox Associates
adinfo.ldy@foxrep.com
805-522-0501

Chicago
Fox Associates
312-644-3888

Newsstand
John Willett, Philip Willett

Office Manager
Kathy Rombough

Orders/Shipping
Grace Gloss

Accounting
Barry Jacobs · Paige Tanner · Agenda Davis

Contributing Writers
Nate Allen, Mark Anderson, Bryant-Jon Anteola, Mike Ashley, Stephen Bailey, Mike Barber, Nick Baumgardner, Chad Bishop, John Blanchette, Michael Bonner, Paul Borden, Brent Briggeman, Mike Brown, Jim Buice, Cory Butzin, Jeff Call, Andrew Carter, Guerry Clegg, Bob Condotta, Chad Conine, Ben Cook, Graham Couch, Chadd Cripe, Ken Cross, Dominick DiRienzo, Dennis Dodd, Brian Dohn, David Drew, Jimmy Durkin, Wescott Eberts, Dirk Facer, Bob Ferrante, Joe Giglio, Jon Gold, Thomas Goldkamp, Geoff Grammer, Rob Gray, Steve Greenberg, Jeff Greer, Tom Groeschen, Seth Gruen, Doug Haller, Craig Handel, Derek Harper, Tommy Hicks, Ryan Holmgren, John Hoover, Jeff Hunter, Jimmy Hyams, Sal Interdonato, Chris Jackson, Jesse Johnson, Tom Keegan, Hugh Kellenberger, Tom Kubat, Theo Lawson, Tod Leonard, Chris Level, Matt Lowe, Daniel Malone, Matt Markey, Tyler Mason, Dave Matter, Will McKay, Natalie Meisler, Carlos Mendez, Harry Minium, Gina Mizell, Dave Moormann, Marc Morehouse, Tony Moss, Jason Munz, Chris Murray, Bob Narang, Tammy Nunez, Jeffrey Parson, Steve Pivovar, Kelly Quinlan, Jerry Ratcliffe, Derek Redd, Jeff Reynolds, Pete Sampson, Lyn Scarbrough, Rich Scarcella, David Scott, Brad Senkiw, Jennifer Smith, James Staley, Brook Stockberger, Phil Stukenborg, Jeffrey Tarpley, Jesse Temple, Ryan Thorburn, Stephen Tsai, Bill Wagner, Christopher Walsh, Jeff Washburn, Ari Wasserman, John Werner, John Whittle, Christopher Wuensch, Steve Wiseman, Scott Wolf, Paul Zeise

Contributing Photographers
Steve Beyer, Tomasso DeRosa, Morris Fostoff, Jeff Goldberg, Doug Holleman, Dennis Hubbard, Ron Kovach, John Pyle, Joe Robbins, Dave Sizer, Brian Tirpak, Michael Wade, John Williamson and RD Moore

AP Images · Icon Sports Media
USA Today Sports Images

★ **TAILGATER TRUTH #29** ★

GAME DAY WITH HD

IS LIKE BACON-WRAPPED BACON WITH A SIDE OF BACON

With **Tailgater**™ you get quarterback-sacking HD for a crystal clear picture that makes you feel like you're on the 50-yard line. So don't sweat missing the game – but maybe worry about that potato salad your buddy bought on clearance. **#TailgaterTruths**

dish

Find out more at dish.com/tailgater • Call 1-877-748-9301

Requires antenna and receiver purchase. Monthly fees and limits on number and type of receivers will apply. All prices, packages, programming, features, functionality and offers subject to change without notice. All charges, including monthly programming, pay-per-view and equipment upgrades, must be paid in advance; failure to pay by due date will lead to service disconnection within 24 hours. Offer subject to terms of applicable Promotional and Residential Customer agreements. Taxes or reimbursement charges for state gross earnings taxes may apply. Additional restrictions may apply. © 2015 DISH Network L.L.C. All rights reserved.

NATIONAL PICKS

Photo by: Jerome Miron-USA TODAY Sports

Every reason to expect Urbanites to keep soaring

1. OHIO STATE

It only feels like a hundred years ago when Ohio State — its highest of hopes seemingly dashed by a season-ending injury to star quarterback Braxton Miller — lost at home by two touchdowns to Virginia Tech. Since that unsightly 2014 evening in Columbus, the Buckeyes rallied to greatness behind second- and third-string quarterbacks, repositioned themselves as national giants, and even put a flattering shine on the oft-criticized Big Ten. Indeed, they've merely changed everything.

Isn't it just a reflection of all things Urban Meyer? That this is what Buckeyes had anticipated, even expected, when he stepped into the job just three years ago? No longer does Alabama's Nick Saban stand alone as the king of college football coaches. Meyer is right there at the big bowl, challenging Saban for every kibble. Simply put, OSU is a giant fully awakened.

THE GOOD NEWS: Gosh, where to start? It almost doesn't seem to matter if it's Cardale Jones or J.T. Barrett under center, or even if it's Miller, who might be playing elsewhere when the September 7 opener at Virginia Tech comes. Under any circumstances, that's a rematch from hell for the Hokies. If the Buckeyes do what they utterly expect to do there, the rest should be a matter of a rudimentary equation: Best offensive players in the Big Ten (hello, Ezekiel Elliott) plus best defensive players (nice to see you again, Joey Bosa) equal can't-screw-this-up.

THE BAD NEWS: Did we mention the game at Virginia Tech? Well, it's a bit scary. OSU must play at Michigan, too, and new Wolverines coach Jim Harbaugh was so frighteningly good against top opponents at Stanford, it invites doubt into the picture.

OUR CALL: There won't be a regular-season contest in which the Buckeyes don't have a gigantic edge in — what's that word? — talent. That monumental collection of talent, along with Meyer's eminence, makes No. 1 an easy call.

2. TCU

No longer under the radar

It still has to hurt. TCU was so good last season — so dominant. And yet the Horned Frogs were dissed and dismissed by the College Football Playoff selection committee when it mattered most. Who's to say they wouldn't have given a (much) better showing than, say, Florida State did? But it's water under the bridge now. More important is that TCU has completely overcome its early shyness in the Big 12, and this 2015 bunch could be Patterson's best yet.

THE GOOD NEWS: QB Trevone Boykin is beyond-the-pale great. Does that sound like a little much? Get over it. Boykin could start at any school in the country and either make that team better or, at worst, keep it humming. And he is joined by so many returning starters (10) from a top offense, it's silly. Just as exciting: TCU's defense will roar like it hasn't in a while.

THE BAD NEWS: We're still looking ... maybe it's the tough road schedule? Visits to Minnesota, Kansas State, Oklahoma State and Oklahoma are going to be challenging, but all those games are winnable.

OUR CALL: The committee wouldn't dare rain on an 11-1 TCU parade again, would it? The Frogs — who get Baylor at home in the regular-season finale — have 12-0 potential.

3. ALABAMA

Not quite flush, but still the Tide

So who are the Crimson Tide, anyway? Are they a collection of stud recruits who'll come up short, as in the postseasons of 2013 and 2014? Or are they an angry, ultra-motivated team that will crush every foe in their path, lifting the program, Nick Saban and the entire SEC back to the top of the heap? It could end up somewhere in between, but in between doesn't fly in Tuscaloosa.

THE GOOD NEWS: Will it be Jake Coker under center? Whoever takes the snaps will turn around and see running back Derrick Henry, and all sorts of good things will flow from there. Defensive lineman A'Shawn Robinson and linebacker Reggie Ragland are locked into crush mode for what looks to be a nasty D.

THE BAD NEWS: The Iron Bowl will be played down the road a smidge in Auburn. Yeah, that could be a season-changing sort of deal. Also, offensive coordinator Lane Kiffin will be dealing with an almost entirely new group of starters.

OUR CALL: Hell-lo, this is Bama we're talking about. We feel like maybe we've said that before, but hasn't everybody? A spectacular SEC West division makes for tough sledding, but this is Ala-damn-bama.

4. OREGON

Staying on top even without Mr. Heisman

If the acquisition of Eastern Washington graduate transfer quarterback Vernon Adams is the offseason heist we think it is, the Ducks will be just fine after losing that Heisman kid. Now, of course, Adams still has to show up, win the job over 2014 backup Jeff Lockie, and prove his worth week-to-week at the highest level. What he did to Washington last season — 475 passing yards and seven touchdowns — was a pretty big hint, though.

THE GOOD NEWS: "Big Play VA" was a two-time runner-up for the Walter Payton Award (the Heisman of the FCS). Royce Freeman, Byron Marshall, Thomas Tyner, Bralon Addison, Devon Allen ... the Oregon offense will have, quarterback pending, all the speed and elegance for which it is known.

THE BAD NEWS: Can't pretend that the Oregon defense is elite. Very good, yes. But not elite. The Ducks ducked a Michigan State punch last season in Eugene; doing so in East Lansing will be even tougher.

OUR CALL: By picking them at No. 4, we're probably asking the Ducks to win at Michigan State early in the year or else have to run the table in the Pac-12. Tall order, but we'd have to ask the same of another team, and, well, we trust Oregon.

5. BAYLOR

One more step to elite status

Art Briles and his boys ended the 2014 season in a puddle of "what ifs?" What if the team had showed up ready to rock at West Virginia? What if the massive comeback victory over TCU hadn't taken so long to materialize? What if the playoff committee believed in "one true champion?" What if the Cotton Bowl gag against Michigan State never happened? You get the picture. Baylor is a big-time program, but it still gets in its own way at times.

THE GOOD NEWS: So much talent, there's no way the Bears will fail to compete for a Big 12 title. RB Shock Linwood and receivers KD Cannon and Corey Coleman will have monster seasons. A defense led by freak-of-freaks DL Shawn Oakman is stocked like none Briles has had.

THE BAD NEWS: How good is QB Seth Russell, anyway? Any lingering uncertainty about him will need to be resolved by the brutal November, with Kansas State, Oklahoma State and TCU on the road, and Oklahoma at home.

OUR CALL: There's at least one loss on that schedule along the way, and one loss could be enough to snuff out the playoff chances of a team that — old story — plays absolutely nobody out of conference.

6. MICHIGAN STATE

Tough, physical, strong-willed

It's an interesting time to be a Spartan. Big Ten East mate Ohio State has ascended to a level MSU might not be capable of reaching. Fellow division rival Michigan is on the mega-prowl after hiring Jim Harbaugh as coach. But Mark Dantonio and his program have been overlooked before. Lower the ceiling on Sparty at your own risk.

THE GOOD NEWS: A mentality has been set in East Lansing — in a phrase, it's to kick the unholy crap out of everybody. So take to the bank that Sparty will be tough, physical and strong-willed. It helps that Connor Cook is back at quarterback and that DE Shilique Calhoun still is on hand to make opponents cry for mama.

THE BAD NEWS: It's hard enough that MSU, without former star defensive coordinator Pat Narduzzi, has to face Oregon in an early game, but it's at home. The road schedule includes Michigan, Nebraska and — yikes — Ohio State. Raise your hand if you see the Green Machine swallowing up all those mouthfuls. Nobody? Not us, either.

OUR CALL: Without much doubt, we'll still call this the Big Ten's second-best team. The Spartans can old-school the rest of the Big Ten — other than Ohio State — into submission.

7. Notre Dame

Exorcising own demons is the key

We could argue all day about what was Notre Dame's lowest point in 2014. The heartbreak in Tallahassee? Losing at home to Northwestern? Falling apart at Arizona State? Embarrassing itself at USC? The point is, there were a lot of low points. But a big bounce-back in 2015 would fix everything, and the deep Irish are capable of delivering it.

THE GOOD NEWS: The Irish will be very experienced on both sides. Their offensive line, led by Ronnie Stanley and Nick Martin, will give whoever wins the quarterback battle — Everett Golson or Malik Zaire — a chance at a special season. The defense will be strong. Maybe not 2012 strong, but balanced, tough and explosive in the back end.

THE BAD NEWS: There has to be at least some question about the mental toughness of this group, which, when the going got tough a year ago, revealed a startling lack of fortitude. When negativity creeps in at Notre Dame, it can become quite a bad scene.

OUR CALL: Why not the Irish? Why can't they leap into playoff contention? They have the horses to do it. Early results against Texas (home), Georgia Tech (home) and Clemson (road) will speak volumes.

8. AUBURN

Sharpening up their teeth

Over its final five games last season, Auburn — whose only victory in that stretch came against Samford — pretty well surrendered the identity it had formed in reaching the 2013 national title game. The offense was pretty good, of course, but it wasn't a clutch unit. The defense? Not clutch, not opportunistic, not anything good. The immediate challenge for Gus Malzahn and his staff is to set things right again.

THE GOOD NEWS: Speaking of the staff — hello, Will Muschamp, and thank goodness you're here. Muschamp went down in flames as a head coach at Florida, but as a coordinator, he'll put the teeth back in the Tigers' defense. And there might be an overall upgrade from Nick Marshall to Jeremy Johnson at quarterback. Watch out for WR Duke Williams. DE Carl Lawson is ready to roar.

THE BAD NEWS: Williams is the only returning starter in the offensive skill group (although it's not without emerging talent). The secondary could be a particular weakness.

OUR CALL: If the Tigers can survive an opening neutral-site matchup with Louisville and an SEC-opening visit to LSU — huge "if," right? — they'll be in serious contention for the playoff. We like this team to bounce back from last season and peak late.

9. Clemson

Time to overtake FSU

OK, so the whole rivalry thingy with Florida State hasn't been working out that well. What're you gonna do? Actually, this is a great time for Clemson to do something about it. The Tigers aren't strong favorites over FSU in the ACC Atlantic — many would argue they aren't the favorites at all — but they have fewer questions to answer, plus the home field when the teams meet in November.

THE GOOD NEWS: Times are good when you can have the nation's No. 1 defense, as the Tigers did in 2014, and hold on to a star coordinator such as Brent Venables. The offense gets the expected return of quarterback Deshaun Watson from an ACL injury. Only a sophomore, Watson has Heisman potential.

THE BAD NEWS: Former offensive coordinator Chad Morris took the head job at SMU, a significant loss for the Tigers. Jeff Scott and Tony Elliott were promoted to co-coordinators, an arrangement that doesn't always work out. Venables has to coach up several new starters on D.

OUR CALL: When the Tigers visit Louisville in Week 3, it'll be their second game in five days. After that, they'll have two-plus weeks to prep for a huge home test against Notre Dame. Clear those hurdles and a glorious finish will be within reach.

10. GEORGIA

Poised for something big

Crazy thought: How about the Bulldogs don't lose the SEC East to Missouri this season? Or to upstart Tennessee or anybody else? As so often has been the case under Mark Richt, Georgia is — based on talent — the team to beat in the East. If this program had a better history of delivering on its promise, a lot of folks would be picking the Dawgs to win the SEC, and more.

THE GOOD NEWS: Can we talk about Nick Chubb? We love Nick Chubb. We love just saying "Nick Chubb." It fits the stubby-legged ferocity with which he carries the football — the guy is the superstar of what will be one of the nation's premier running games.

THE BAD NEWS: Who's the quarterback? Richt and new offensive coordinator Brian Schottenheimer may need all of training camp to figure that out. Georgia needs a new pair of starting wideouts, too.

OUR CALL: Second-year defensive coordinator Jeremy Pruitt is building a dominant group — a dangerous reality for the rest of the East. Shootouts: bad. Shutouts: good. In Athens this year, the D is the real key.

11. USC

Out of the shadows, back to glory?

It's getting easier to buy into the Trojans, out of the shadows of NCAA sanctions and building back the depth that will allow second-year coach Steve Sarkisian to stomp on the accelerator and shorten the gap back to the glory days of Troy. That those days could actually arrive this very season is a possibility we long considered and can't quite dismiss.

THE GOOD NEWS: Senior Cody Kessler leads the Pac-12's quarterback brigade, which is always a good start. Goodness, some of the talent on this team takes your breath away — safety-turned-linebacker Su'a Cravens, corner/receiver/returner Adoree' Jackson, receiver JuJu Smith — and more of that young talent is washing up in waves.

THE BAD NEWS: Leonard Williams was a monster of a defensive lineman, and USC still has some things to figure out up front when it reconvenes in August. The safety spots are another concern on defense, and incoming freshmen will have a chance to stake out roles in camp.

OUR CALL: Admit it: Most of your questions about 'SC center on the head coach being able to shed his "7-win Sark" label. Same here. The Trojans will zoom past seven and capture the tough Pac-12 South, but ultimately bump up against the Green ceiling (yes, that's Oregon).

12. Florida State

Keying on team-wide accountability

Maybe, in some small way, moving on from the Jameis Winston era is a good thing for the Seminoles. Certainly, the spotlight isn't shining as brightly. But the Winston era was an enormous success on the field, and that'll be an extraordinarily tough act to follow. Have we seen the last of FSU in the playoff mix for a while?

THE GOOD NEWS: Without a singular superstar to bail them out of late-game jams, the 'Noles move forward with a spirit of team-wide accountability. That should be especially motivating for a defense that has top-end speed and, yes, potential in the pass rush. FSU had an ACC-low 17 sacks last season. How does doubling that number sound, fellas?

THE BAD NEWS: That former quarterback was 26-1. Look, FSU just won't be as good without him. And it isn't just Winston who's gone; Fisher and his staff must replace about half their starters from 2014. The offensive line could be a real mess.

OUR CALL: The closer you look at the 'Noles, the harder it is to see pieces of a championship puzzle. But it'll still be hard as heck to beat this team, which has a great shot at its customary double-digit victories.

13. LSU

Approaching crossroads, seeking balance

It was a struggle for the Tigers in 2014, when they finished 8-5 — matching the worst record in Les Miles' 10 years at the school — and were dragged down by an impotent, SEC-worst passing attack. With many of its West division mates soaring, LSU is at a fascinating crossroads. Will Miles' program reassert itself as a true national power?

THE GOOD NEWS: LSU still can line up and knock the slobber out of a defense, as it demonstrated last season with a devastating downhill running game. Brutish back Leonard Fournette is one of the best players in the country, and he'll operate behind a high-quality offensive line that could coalesce into a great unit.

THE BAD NEWS: Excellent defensive coordinator John Chavis left for Texas A&M, which has to stick in Miles' craw. Chavis must be looking forward to facing Tigers' quarterbacks Anthony Jennings and Brandon Harris, who don't scare anybody.

OUR CALL: Why does it seem, year after year, that LSU is particularly up against it in the schedule department? Alas, the Tigers can't worry about that. If they want to stay in the West hunt, they'll just have to out-tough everybody.

14 Arizona State

Going all 'High Octane' again

For as much as quarterback Taylor Kelly did for Arizona State over the past three seasons — he at least earned lifetime holiday cards from coach Todd Graham — we liked the way the offense ran when Mike Bercovici had his audition as an injury-replacement last season. Berco takes over full time now, and even with wideout Jaelen Strong moving on to the NFL, he has multiple live wires to whom he can get the ball, so Graham can go all "High Octane" again.

THE GOOD NEWS: D.J. Foster can get comfortable as a 1,000-yard receiver in the slot because sophomores Kalen Ballage and Demario Richard can handle his old tailback spot. Ballage was super in the spring, doubling (tripling?) as a kick returner, and (here's the fun part) as a third-down pass rusher.

THE BAD NEWS: Graham's defense is one of the best at causing havoc, but he spent the springtime looking for answers at his havoc-causing "Devilbacker" position. An opener vs. Texas A&M in Houston is a either a great opportunity ... or an ice-bucket reality check.

OUR CALL: ASU has posted back-to-back 10-win seasons. That sounds like the ceiling for this season, but a very fine ceiling it would be.

15. Georgia Tech

Schedule tempers optimistic upside

Man alive, did the Yellow Jackets ever open some eyes with their finish in 2014, knocking off Georgia before shredding Mississippi State in a bowl game for their 11th victory. This team certainly ought to be viewed as a serious threat to Clemson and Florida State in the ACC.

THE GOOD NEWS: Dazzling quarterback Justin Thomas is back to run Paul Johnson's triple-option attack, and he mixes in just enough quality with his arm to give any defense fits. Tech's experienced defense should make a strong move up the ACC's statistical rankings.

THE BAD NEWS: Other than Thomas, the cast of skill players on offense will be mostly new. Thomas is the right guy to hold them steady, but it's still a challenging scenario. Also, the schedule: Tech gets both Clemson and FSU in divisional crossover games and must travel to Notre Dame.

OUR CALL: There's enough "bad" above that it'll take everything Tech has to win 11 games again. If it can fight its way to the top of the Coastal, though, the ACC title game will be can't-miss theater.

16. Wisconsin

Chryst back where he belongs

So the Gary Andersen experiment sure turned out to be ... weird. Madison wasn't the place for him, apparently, but it feels like home — literally — to replacement Paul Chryst. He's a Madison native, a UW alum and a former offensive coordinator who skippered some of the Badgers' best offenses.

THE GOOD NEWS: The Badgers will continue to blast away in the run game, with Corey Clement a worthy successor to Montee Ball and Melvin Gordon and — the usual — a wall of giants up front to pave the way. Wisconsin held on to defensive coordinator Dave Aranda, which definitely helps.

THE BAD NEWS: One-dimensional quarterback Joel Stave — big arm, no legs — doesn't allow for as much fun as the Badgers had when that one guy Russell Wilson was QBing for Chryst. Oh, well. The pass-catching crew is pretty run-of-the-mill, and the defense has some rebuilding to do in the front seven.

OUR CALL: We didn't even mention that the Badgers have to open in Arlington, Texas, against — yikes — Alabama. With the stench of last year's 59-0 loss to Ohio State in the Big Ten title game still wafting, there's no way to see a league title happening. But the B1G West is weak.

17. Tennessee

On the rise, but this high? Sure!

Now this is fun. Let's take the Vols — who haven't played above-.500 ball in the SEC since 2007 — and vault them all the way to No. 17? But it's not crazy. This program is building toward something very exciting, and a flying leap to the top of the SEC East isn't at all out of the question.

THE GOOD NEWS: A hundred starters return from last year's 7-6 team. That's a slight exaggeration, but seriously — just about everybody is back, and that makes this a hugely important season in Knoxville. It wouldn't mean nearly as much if the Vols had a sluggo at quarterback, but Josh Dobbs has best-in-the-league potential.

THE BAD NEWS: Tennessee has lost five straight against Georgia and 10 in a row to Florida. There are dragons to slay, and it's more than fair to wonder if the Vols have the wherewithal to do it. The Vols annual crossover game with Alabama won't make things any easier.

OUR CALL: There is no doubt the arrow is pointing up for this program. UT will be a tough out for anybody it plays. Winning the East is unlikely — 0 for 3 vs. Missouri so far, by the way — but the earth is shifting in Knoxville and we're not about to pretend otherwise.

18. Oklahoma State

Bouncing back from aberration

Last season sure was a bummer — Mike Gundy's first foray through a sub-.500 Big 12 campaign since 2006. Geez, Gundy wasn't even 40 then. But now he and his program have a chance to sneak up on the Big 12 all over again. And, of course, Gundy — long rumored to be considering other coaching jobs — remains in Stillwater to see it through.

THE GOOD NEWS: There's lots of it, partly because the Cowboys bring back loads of experience on both sides of the ball. Consider, too, a potentially transformative field general, young Mason Rudolph, who has grabbed the reins of this team as only a born leader can. OSU also gets Kansas State, TCU, Baylor and Oklahoma — in that order — at home.

THE BAD NEWS: OSU was far behind the curve in turnover margin last season, which simply can't be repeated if this team is going to contend in the Big 12. Are there enough playmakers on defense? Is there enough discipline on offense? Gundy and his staff are under the gun to coach their boys up.

OUR CALL: A sudden move to the top of the Big 12 is possible here. We're not simply talking about improvement — a league title could happen. But nobody says it'll be easy.

19. Arizona

Margin of error remains slim

Rich Rodriguez coaxed 10 regular-season victories, a Pac-12 South title and a spot in a Big Six bowl out of Arizona last season. RichRod has settled into the Southwest comfortably — "Palm trees and sunshine ... are you kidding me?" he says with a smile — and he really is just getting started as he enters his fourth season. Not every year is going to be 2014, but it's reasonable to place the Wildcats in the annual Top 25 discussion for the foreseeable future.

THE GOOD NEWS: The team's best player — all-everything linebacker Scooby Wright — is also the team's hardest worker. On offense, Arizona has hit the skill-position trifecta with QB Anu Solomon, RB Nick Wilson and WR Cayleb Jones.

THE BAD NEWS: As practical matters, the defense needs more playmakers around Wright and the offensive line is replacing three starters. Mostly, though, you wonder if Arizona can come close to replicating its 6-1 record last season in games decided by seven points or less.

OUR CALL: The team's all-around depth is still lacking. With that, it's a bit much to expect Arizona to successfully tip-toe to another South title while playing 12 consecutive games without a bye.

20. UCLA

A fork in the road awaits

Let's just go ahead and say it: We're not quite sure what to do with UCLA. This will be coach Jim Mora's most talented roster, top to bottom, and that comes on the heels of a 10-win season. If you tell us the Bruins are top-10 timber in your preseason rankings, we'll shrug and nod and say, "OK." Others might see disaster as UCLA is almost certainly going to go with a true freshman at quarterback. We're putting the Bruins at No. 20, splitting the difference.

THE GOOD NEWS: UCLA's defense is strong up the middle with interior linemen Kenny Clark and Eddie Vanderdoes, and ultra-athletic in the back with corners Ishmael Adams and Fabian Moreau. RB Paul Perkins (1,575 yards last season) charges behind a now grown-up offensive line.

THE BAD NEWS: Everybody loves Josh Rosen. Arguably the nation's top QB recruit, he enrolled early and impressed enough in the spring to consider adding a letter to the stadium name. Get it? From Rose Bowl to Rosen Bowl. (Too soon?). True freshman QBs, though, usually do true freshman things.

OUR CALL: We'll know soon in the conference season which way this is going. UCLA opens at Arizona, then is home to Arizona State in tone-setting South division games.

21. Oklahoma

In search of missing mojo

What the heck happened? We're still trying to make sense of the Sooners' fade in 2014. A 4-0 start to a 4-5 finish (that's 8-5 overall) was beyond unacceptable. The 40-6 loss to Clemson in the Citrus Bowl was absolutely humiliating. Yet, why can't we quit OU?

THE GOOD NEWS: Last season is over. The pressure that was on a popular pick for the first College Football Playoff has waned. And — oh, yes — the Sooners may be pretty close to great offensively in 2015. The addition of young, exciting coordinator Lincoln Riley could spark a positive shift in Norman. Trevor Knight will be a quarterback reborn, unless bigger-armed transfer Baker Mayfield gets the nod (good chance). Either guy will be honored to hand the pigskin to studly back Samaje Perine.

THE BAD NEWS: Did you watch the Sooners sleep-walk through their losses last season? There's something missing from this program. Call it the fire to win the big one. That just doesn't look good on Bob Stoops.

OUR CALL: There just seems to be more urgency at TCU and Baylor. At Texas, too. The Sooners have the horses, but the mojo this squad brings into 2015 isn't impressive.

22. Boise State

Rugged September offers possibilities

There's no better bet than Boise to rise from the minor leagues of college football and shake up the playoff picture in 2015. Unfortunately for the Broncos, though, the out-of-conference slate is tougher than tough. Bryan Harsin will have to channel his best Chris Petersen to make this thing work on a grand scale.

THE GOOD NEWS: The list of returning starters is almost unending. From the O-line to most of the offensive skill guys to every level of the defense, BSU is in rock-solid shape. That'll go a long way in September matchups with Washington, BYU and Virginia.

THE BAD NEWS: The quarterback position is unsettled, and that's putting it lightly. The Broncos will go through fall camp with picking a starting QB as the No. 1 priority. It seems like forever since this team had the comfort of do-everything-right Kellen Moore to lean on. Ryan Finley could be the guy, but he's far from an automatic answer, and his spring arrest did not help.

OUR CALL: If we thought of BSU as a rip-through-the-Mountain-West sort of team, we'd rank it higher. More likely, there's a loss or two laying in wait, even if they get through the gauntlet of September. And that means the playoff will be reserved for the big conference boys. As usual.

23. Texas A&M

On the lookout for consistency

Noteworthy, isn't it, that the Aggies seemed more distracted and more bought into their own hype after Johnny Manziel left than they were when he was still around? A 5-0 start in 2014 had A&M looking like a playoff contender. The five defeats that followed were, collectively, galling. Just how real-deal is this team and program? Therein lies the problem of playing in the SEC West — the margin of error is almost imperceptible.

THE GOOD NEWS: Kevin Sumlin's offense will put up points. There is quality and depth at receiver and running back, and Kyle Allen is a steady performer at quarterback. And the addition of defensive coordinator John Chavis has everyone stoked, since a bolstered defense portends the consistency that this program sorely needs.

THE BAD NEWS: The physical play up front in the SEC continues to be tremendously challenging for A&M. Are the Aggies tough enough to line up against Arkansas in September, for example, and deal with a hellacious rushing attack? Chavis will have to work miracles just to get his defense near the middle of the pack in the league.

OUR CALL: Contention in the SEC West is too much to hope for. But with a relatively soft league schedule, A&M can step forward from last year's 8-5 record, which would represent meaningful progress and overall success.

24. Virginia Tech

Beamer Ball seeking big bounce

College football can be mighty strange — case in point, the 2014 Hokies, who were good enough to win by 14 at Ohio State, soaring in the national rankings for their efforts, yet bad enough to then lose six of their next nine games. That's three straight seasons now in which the Hokies have been run-of-the-mill. The words "Beamer Ball" never sounded more hollow ... but, sigh, we're beginning to fall for this defense all over again.

THE GOOD NEWS: According to Beamer, his players have accepted responsibility for the program's recent dip and shown tremendous resolve to turn things around. Sometimes, attitude is everything. The Hokies repeatedly seemed to cave in tough spots last season — and in the two before that — which obviously can't continue.

THE BAD NEWS: Will the offense again be bogged down by QB Michael Brewer's turnover issues? Is a young offensive line nearly good enough to support Brewer's hoped-for improvement?

OUR CALL: We're not about to see six losses again, but three or four of them seems likely. The opener at home against Ohio State — probably unwinnable — will be good preparation for the rest of the season.

25. Missouri

Showing that they're no fluke

Who's foolish enough to overlook a Tigers program that has jumped up and snapped back-to-back SEC East division titles out of thin air? Mizzou — simply better coached, perhaps, and certainly better at executing — has frustrated the heck out of its new conference rivals in the process. Why not do it again?

THE GOOD NEWS: There's continuity at the most important spot on the field, quarterback, where Maty Mauk has embodied greater-than-the-sum-of-his-parts effectiveness. A veteran offensive line will give Mauk a chance to break in a new batch of skill players. The defense needs new pass rushers, but since when have the Tigers struggled to dial up pressure?

THE BAD NEWS: Gary Pinkel has enjoyed a run of strong players who were hungry to be developed into standouts, and one can never take such a thing for granted. The Tigers seemingly are thin at receiver and along the defensive front. Any drop-off will be felt acutely in the rugged SEC.

OUR CALL: A third straight appearance in the SEC title game feels like a reach, but we're done stuffing Mizzou in the also-ran box. Without a lot of national fanfare, Pinkel has built quite the well-oiled machine.

RATING THE TEAMS 1-128

1. Ohio State	Big Ten	1	6. Michigan State	Big Ten	2	11. USC	Pac-12	2	16. Wisconsin	Big Ten	3	21. Oklahoma	Big 12	4
2. TCU	Big 12	1	7. Notre Dame	Ind	1	12. Florida State	ACC	2	17. Tennessee	SEC	5	22. Boise State	MW	1
3. Alabama	SEC	1	8. Auburn	SEC	2	13. LSU	SEC	4	18. Oklahoma State	Big 12	3	23. Texas A&M	SEC	6
4. Oregon	Pac-12	1	9. Clemson	ACC	1	14. Arizona State	Pac-12	3	19. Arizona	Pac-12	4	24. Virginia Tech	ACC	4
5. Baylor	Big 12	2	10. Georgia	SEC	3	15. Georgia Tech	ACC	3	20. UCLA	Pac-12	5	25. Missouri	SEC	7

No.	Team	Conf.	Conf. Rank	
26.	Stanford	Pac-12	6	All the usual toughness, plus emerging RB Christian McCaffrey.
27.	Arkansas	SEC	8	Defense came on late, and you know Hogs are going to run, run, run.
28.	Ole Miss	SEC	9	Talented enough to be Top 10, but QB play is the BIG question.
29.	Michigan	Big Ten	4	This fixer-upper won't take long after team went 46-42 post-Lloyd Carr.
30.	Nebraska	Big Ten	5	Mike Riley hoping to end 7-year run of four-loss records, in a good way.
31.	Mississippi State	SEC	10	QB Dak Prescott tries to recapture magic of 2014 as a senior.
32.	Utah	Pac-12	7	Utes shouldn't slide after posting a 9-4 record a season ago.
33.	NC State	ACC	5	QB Jacoby Brissett is why NC State will improve on 3-5 ACC mark.
34.	Texas	Big 12	5	After cleaning house in 6-7 debut, Charlie Strong will see progress.
35.	Louisville	ACC	6	Nothing set, but QB Reggie Bonnafon made strong spring claim for job.
36.	West Virginia	Big 12	6	Beat Baylor, lost to TCU by 1. Mountaineers will be a tough out again.
37.	North Carolina	ACC	7	Talented QB Marquise Williams gives Heels edge on middle of Coastal.
38.	Florida	SEC	11	You know Gators will play D; coach Jim McElwain has to goose the O.
39.	Duke	ACC	8	New QB, but Duke has some staying power after 19 wins in two years.
40.	Memphis	AAC	1	Tigers' amazing turnaround continues, led by QB Paxton Lynch.
41.	Penn State	Big Ten	6	Too many INTs for Christian Hackenberg in Lions' 7-6 season.
42.	Cincinnati	AAC	2	Gunner Kiel and crew go to Memphis, BYU, Houston; host the 'Canes.
43.	Kansas State	Big 12	7	Bill Snyder always finds a way to win, but Cats won't reach 9 this year.
44.	Cal	Pac-12	8	QB Jared Goff has great group of WRs; anyone here play D?
45.	Bowling Green	MAC	1	Loads of offense will propel Falcons to third MAC title in three years.
46.	BYU	Ind	2	So much depends on health of QB Taysom Hill, RB Jamaal Williams.
47.	Texas Tech	Big 12	8	Patrick Mahomes or Davis Webb? That's main QB question for TT.
48.	Iowa	Big Ten	7	Kirk Ferentz is feeling heat; his Hawkeyes are running uphill this season.
49.	South Carolina	SEC	12	Doesn't seem to have enough difference-makers to be SEC factor.
50.	Minnesota	Big Ten	8	Gophers lose key skill from 8-5 team; need steadier QB play.
51.	Northern Illinois	MAC	2	Going for sixth straight MAC West division championship.
52.	UCF	AAC	3	Taking step back after going 15-1 in league play the past two years.
53.	Pitt	ACC	9	Mr. Defense, Pat Narduzzi, has a couple of great offensive weapons.
54.	Miami	ACC	10	QB Brad Kaaya played beyond his years as a freshman last season.
55.	Houston	AAC	4	Cougs snapped up QB guru Tom Herman from Ohio State to be HC.
56.	Washington	Pac-12	9	Huskies working through QB issues, loss of NFL talent on defense.
57.	Boston College	ACC	11	Eagles have to rebuild the O-line, but can hover at 7 wins again.
58.	Rutgers	Big Ten	9	Big Ten's most physical teams pushed newbie Rutgers last season.
59.	Kentucky	SEC	13	School investing in football program, and there are signs of life.
60.	Washington State	Pac-12	10	QB Luke Falk impressed as injury replacement, but job remains open.
61.	Maryland	Big Ten	10	Terps broke even in first Big Ten season, but defense will need work.
62.	Navy	AAC	5	Led by fabulous QB Keenan Reynolds, Mids join the AAC this year.
63.	Virginia	ACC	12	Could be a crossroads season for sixth-year coach Mike London.
64.	Oregon State	Pac-12	11	Long term: Gary Andersen is great hire. Short term: Who's the QB?
65.	Utah State	MW	2	Aggies, led by fine linebackers, will be main threat to Boise State.
66.	Illinois	Big Ten	11	Can't catch a break: WR Mike Dudek suffered torn ACL in spring.
67.	Colorado	Pac-12	12	More competitive last season, but hard to climb Pac-12 South ladder.
68.	Temple	AAC	6	Great defense returns every starter from a team that went 6-6.
69.	Northwestern	Big Ten	12	Cats will have to solve issues at QB and on the offensive line in camp.
70.	Indiana	Big Ten	13	Can't replace RB Tevin Coleman; a healthy QB Nate Sudfeld would help.
71.	San Diego State	MW	3	Donnel Pumphrey ran for 1,867 yards and 20 TDs last season.
72.	Toledo	MAC	3	Shocking, we know: Rockets have some top-notch skill players.
73.	Syracuse	ACC	13	No easy fixes for an offense that was to blame for a 3-9 season.
74.	Western Kentucky	C-USA	1	QB Brandon Doughty returns to lead veteran unit.
75.	Colorado State	MW	4	Hiring SEC coordinator worked once; Rams try again with Mike Bobo.
76.	Vanderbilt	SEC	14	Derek Mason hopes to hit his groove after tough 3-8 first season.
77.	East Carolina	AAC	7	QB Shane Carden and WR Justin Hardy don't play here anymore.
78.	Wake Forest	ACC	14	Deacs went 3-9 but beat Virginia Tech, which beat Ohio State.
79.	Purdue	Big Ten	14	Offensive line provides some help of getting more than one B1G win.
80.	Iowa State	Big 12	9	Cyclones trying to avoid third consecutive season-opening loss to FCS.
81.	Marshall	C-USA	2	Herd has supporting talent, but losing QB Rakeem Cato is big.
82.	Kansas	Big 12	10	Ex-A&M assistant David Beaty will need all of his recruiting mojo.
83.	Louisiana Tech	C-USA	3	Florida transfer QB Jeff Driskel gets a second chance.
84.	Fresno State	MW	5	Lots of rebuilding for Bulldogs, who won weak MW West, but were 6-8.
85.	Appalachian St.	Sun Belt	1	Looking to win the league in only its second season in the league.
86.	Arkansas State	Sun Belt	2	Offense, led by QB Fredi Knighten, will lead the Wolves' way.
87.	Air Force	MW	6	Falcons won't win 10 again, but talented backfield is a plus.
88.	USF	AAC	8	Willie Taggart just 6-18 in his two seasons with South Florida.
89.	Central Michigan	MAC	4	John Bonamego is handed the reins to his first head coaching job.
90.	Middle Tennessee	C-USA	4	QB Austin Grammer must cut turnovers for Blue Raiders to make a run.
91.	Rice	C-USA	5	Owls could win the West, especially with home game vs. La. Tech.
92.	Ohio	MAC	5	Bobcats fell to 6-6 last season, but they have 17 starters returning.
93.	Georgia Southern	Sun Belt	3	Defending Sun Belt champs; nearly beat G-Tech, NC State last year.
94.	UTEP	C-USA	6	Trending up: Had winning record last year for 1st time since 2005.
95.	Louisiana	Sun Belt	4	Cajuns are working on four consecutive 9-4 records.
96.	Western Michigan	MAC	6	Schedule includes Michigan State, Ohio State and all the MAC bullies.
97.	San Jose State	MW	7	Nice offense, but Spartans will have tough time stopping ground game.
98.	FIU	C-USA	7	Offense could come through, but FIU seems stuck in C-USA middle.
99.	Wyoming	MW	8	Second-year coach Craig Bohl needs more time to bring in the horses.
100.	Buffalo	MAC	7	New coach Lance Leipold went 109-6 at Div. III Wisconsin-Whitewater.
101.	Texas State	Sun Belt	5	Has offense to be reckoned with as Bobcats push for postseason.
102.	Tulane	AAC	9	Spotty offense must improve for Green Wave to improve on 3-9 mark.
103.	New Mexico	MW	9	Lobos completed just 76 passes last year; only Army, Navy had fewer.
104.	Old Dominion	C-USA	8	QB Taylor Heinke is gone, but RB Ray Lawry will lead way on ground.
105.	Kent State	MAC	8	Good news: 2013 leading rusher Trayion Durham is back after '14 injury.
106.	Akron	MAC	9	Influx of transfers could help Zips find way after five-win season.
107.	Nevada	MW	10	Three-way quarterback race could spill over into the season.
108.	South Alabama	Sun Belt	6	Program infused with transfers via UAB, including QB Cody Clements.
109.	Florida Atlantic	C-USA	9	QB Jaquez Johnson and improved run defense are two good things.
110.	North Texas	C-USA	10	Mean Green won't make much headway, if any, from a 4-8 season.
111.	UConn	AAC	10	Huskies hit bottom — they hope — with a two-win season in 2014.
112.	SMU	AAC	11	This will at least be fun to watch with coach Chad Morris taking over.
113.	Southern Miss	C-USA	11	Once-proud program has four wins in the past two seasons.
114.	Tulsa	AAC	12	Former Baylor play-caller Phil Montgomery is the new head coach.
115.	UMass	MAC	10	Minutemen lose their QB, and their TE left early to try the NFL.
116.	Army	Ind	3	Black Knights replacing every starter in triple-option backfield.
117.	Louisiana-Monroe	Sun Belt	7	QB remains an issue, and the running game won't be a savior.
118.	UNLV	MW	11	Worth a try: Local high school coach Tony Sanchez takes over.
119.	Ball State	MAC	11	Inexperience at QB and RB will limit Ball State's ceiling.
120.	Hawaii	MW	12	Three seasons of Norm Chow as coach has resulted in only 8 wins.
121.	Miami (Ohio)	MAC	12	Chuck Martin went 2-10 in first season, but played several games close.
122.	UTSA	C-USA	12	Roadrunners missed chance to be good last year; hello, rebuilding.
123.	Idaho	Sun Belt	8	Streak of three 1-win seasons in a row will end ... and in a good way.
124.	Troy	Sun Belt	9	Program in a rough patch, with no bowl game since 2010.
125.	Eastern Michigan	MAC	13	Only 11 starters back from a team that was 2-10 a season ago.
126.	Georgia State	Sun Belt	10	Will show improvement after going winless in Sun Belt last season.
127.	New Mexico St.	Sun Belt	11	Not much hope if young, small defense remains one of nation's worst.
128.	Charlotte	C-USA	13	Only been playing football since 2013, so 49ers will take some lumps.

DOUBLE OUR PLEASURE

NO SENSE TO WAIT 12 YEARS FOR AN 8-TEAM PLAYOFF

BY DENNIS DODD | Photo by Jerome Miron-USA TODAY Sports

Admit it. The first thing you thought when the first four-team College Football Playoff bracket was released was, *"how soon until we go to eight?"*

We really ought to quit kidding ourselves. Let's just spring the eight-team playoff right now.

We admit we have been properly tantalized to the point that now it's nothing more than formality that three rounds will eventually replace the already-less-than-satisfying four-team system. Besides, the seal has already been broken on what amounted to the final arguments against sending quarterfinalists into the fray.

Bumping up against final exams? Please. The 2014 bowl season started 13 days after Selection Sunday, when eight teams played on Dec. 20.

So, eight teams can play in bowl games, but they can't stomach the idea of playing quarterfinals in an expanded College Football Playoff later that week?

Please.

BCS presidents used to talk about, **"no second-semester football."** Then their postseason progeny allowed the College Football Playoff to schedule its first championship game on Jan. 12, 2015. Earlier in the day when Ohio State beat Oregon in the first CFP Championship Game, students in Columbus were showing up for their second-semester classes. Oregon players were ostensibly more than a week late for their winter term, which began Jan. 5.

OK, so it might not be ideal to send the student-athletes into a national title game one night, and into biology class a day or two later, but TV networks and advertisers don't always pay the extra half-billion dollars to fit "ideal." Ohio State and Oregon made it work, and so will others.

It would detract from the regular season? We heard that for years from BCS defenders. Then the playoff came along and college football was never more popular. Auburn-Alabama still stirred the soul. Those first CFP rankings went right down to the final games. Ask Baylor and TCU, and No. 4 Ohio State, for that matter.

There's nothing but upside out there. The playoff games were merely the highest-rated events in cable television history.

A cynic might up and declare he or she is sick of being lied to. For now, we'll keep it civil. But it's obvious college football could go to an eight-team playoff tomorrow. Mostly, for all the same reasons it doubled the field from two to four in 2014.

Turning a blind eye to the December academic calendar during finals? It's already happened. Playing an extra game? In this age of concussion scrutiny and litigation, we've already asked college kids to put their bodies on the line for two extra games. Ohio State and Oregon played 15 games ... and no one blinked.

Putting the relevancy of decades-old rivalries in danger? Didn't happen. In fact, TCU-Baylor has never been more bitter.

So it's not a matter of *could* it happen, because it already has. It's just the degree of hypocrisy you want to put up with.

"There is no talk about eight (teams in a playoff) within our group," CFP executive director Bill Hancock said. "This is a stable event. It's going to be with us for 12 years."

This is not calling Hancock a hypocrite. Everyone loves Bill. We'd all love to see him get together with CFP chairman Jeff Long to sing a folk song. It would be nice.

But Hancock is only spouting what the contract says — four teams for a dozen years. And contracts are made to be amended.

And obviously this amendment is required. It's on everyone's mind because we now have a clear view of how it looks to be left out.

"Gary Patterson," Hancock said, when asked about blowback from TCU's exclusion, "is a true gentleman."

TCU beat Iowa State by 52 points on the final day of the season, and the Patterson-coached Horned Frogs dropped from No. 3 to No. 6 in the final CFP rankings.

Where's the logic in *that*?

"Their (selection committee) job was to watch all this film and pick the four best teams no matter who you played, what you did," Patterson said. "All the sudden it came down to, 'Well, *they* played a championship game, but *they* didn't.' That's not what we were told. We were told they were going to pick the four best teams."

> **"I MUST SAY ... THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT GOOD TEAMS BEING LEFT OUT THAT ADDS TO THE VALUE OF BEING IN."**
>
> — Notre Dame Athletic Director Jack Swarbrick

Yes, there was that. The only major conference without a championship game got left out. Patterson subsequently lobbied for six playoff teams.

All of it framed a growing narrative. A *Sports Business Journal* poll determined that 43 percent of respondents believe the playoff is headed to eight within four years. Eighty-two percent say it will happen within seven years.

While straw polls can mean little, the inevitable controversy was stirred up. While TCU dropped precipitously, Ohio State played its way in from No. 5 to No. 4 by beating

Ohio State Buckeyes players pose for a photo after defeating the Oregon Ducks in the 2015 CFP National Championship Game at AT&T Stadium.

Photo by Matthew Emmons-USA TODAY Sports

Wisconsin by 59. The Buckeyes' unlikely three-game run to the championship saved the CFP committee's credibility.

So, after years of insisting that piling up gaudy, embarrassingly lopsided scores should not and does not make a difference in the BCS rankings, as it turned out, the Buckeyes basically bailed out the committee by pouring it on Wisconsin. If OSU was 59 points better than the second-best team in the Big Ten, well, they can leapfrog a team that played in a conference that didn't even have a championship game.

But in the end, the initial Football Four ended up looking fairly seamless. Four conference champions, each of which won the big-boy conference championship games. Of course, there are five of those, so at least one major conference champion will be left out each season that the playoff isn't expanded to eight teams: In 2014, the Big 12 lost out in that game of playoff musical chairs.

The increasingly valid question is why? It doesn't have to be this way. Eight teams allow for inclusion of the champions of the five major conferences plus a Group of Five champion and two at-large teams.

An eight-team playoff this year would have looked like this:

- No. 1 Alabama vs. No. 8 Boise State
- No. 2 Oregon vs. No. 7 Mississippi State
- No. 3 Florida State vs. No. 6 TCU
- No. 4 Ohio State vs. No. 5 Baylor

Everything else is details.

"The appetite for college football is insatiable," said Hancock, not realizing that in a roundabout way he was making a case for eight.

CFP officials are scared to death that an eight-team playoff would nibble away at the regular season's allure. They were concerned a four-team playoff would do the same. They had to be surprised that the first playoff season wildly enhanced the regular season.

The Iron Bowl was the most watched college football game of the season, 13.5 million viewers. UCLA — thus, the L.A. market — lingered around the periphery for most of the season. The state of Mississippi had its run.

Using the pure CFP rankings, undefeated Florida State would have been left out of the BCS. Watching the consistently imperfect 'Noles made for appointment television with a playoff berth at stake for weeks.

You think the Iron Bowl would matter less in an eight-team world? No matter what you thought of the Tuesday rankings show, it was popular programming. We found ourselves interested in why an undefeated Marshall wasn't ranked in early November. One high-ranking college official compared the rankings show to a reality show — American Idol or The Voice.

All of it is not necessarily a bad thing. Maybe Gwen Stefani can host the expanded bracket rankings show.

"I must say ... there's something about good teams being left out," Notre Dame athletic director Jack Swarbrick said, "that adds to the value of being in."

It's going to go from charming to bickering when some coach or another misses out on a six-figure playoff bonus because he didn't beat Iowa State by enough.

"No one knows where that tipping point is in college football so we have to be very careful about it," Hancock said.

"Four doesn't go too far. Four just goes far enough."

Until it doesn't.

Just like they told us about the BCS.

MAKE A PLAY FOR GORDO'S®

Dip into the authentic taste of Gordo's Cheese Dip made with real cheese.

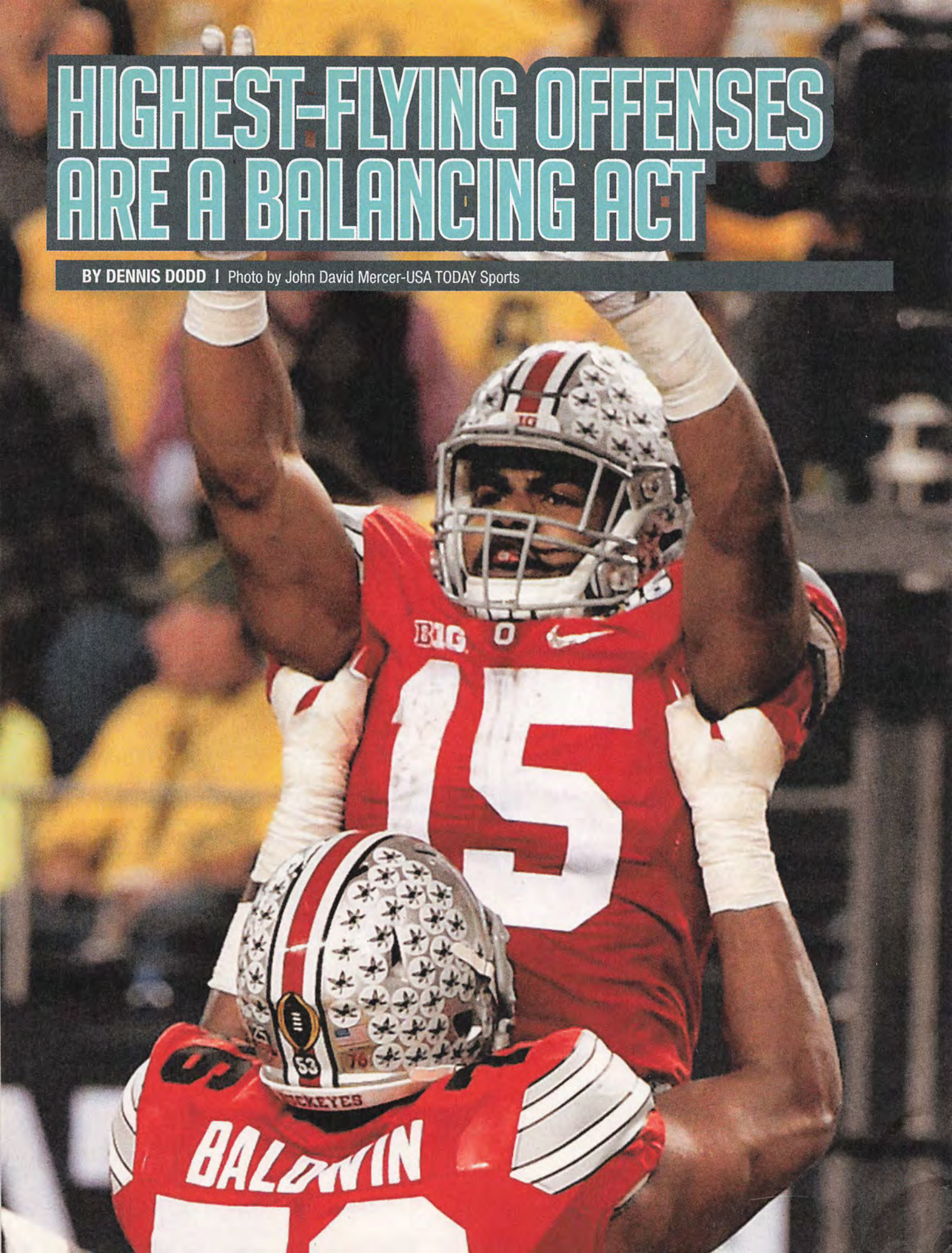
Try all six Cheese Dips: Original, Mild, Hot, Cheese'n Salsa, Chipotle and the newest favorite Yellow Queso.

gordoscheesedip.com

Find us on Facebook | Follow us on Twitter

HIGHEST-FLYING OFFENSES ARE A BALANCING ACT

BY DENNIS DODD | Photo by John David Mercer-USA TODAY Sports



Quality RBs spark point-a-minute offenses in modern college game

The revolution continues.

That would be the offensive revolution that has turned college football into a continual race to the end zone.

It's a point-a-minute every week.

With a record average of 59 points a game last season, we've become accustomed to the high-flying, basketball-on-grass that have quarterbacks, receivers, and the guys trying to stop them — mostly defensive ends and cornerbacks — as the most exciting players on the field.

But while the flyboys get the glory, the infantry does the most important work. Nothing new there. But this Return to the Rush is anchoring the more-substantial, balanced offenses that are equal parts counter play and go routes.

Mention "4.5" and the football cognoscenti think it's a 40 time. But now you know that it is the average yards gained on the ground these days. That's the highest yards per carry in the game's history — yes, far exceeding even the wing-T and Wishbone eras.

Teams rushed for 178.1 yards per game in 2014, the most in 34 years. That number is up for the sixth straight year. Between 2006 and 2013, average rushing touchdowns per game increased almost 25 percent. The 15-year-old single-game rushing record was smashed in consecutive weeks in 2014. Consider that 53 players ran for at least 1,000 yards.

What in the name of Barry Sanders is going on?

Something changed in this revolution. For much of the past decade or so it was based on passing. But only the game's connoisseurs noticed a more subtle change: The offenses have been coming into balance.

Mike Leach's Air Raid only went so far. The year Sam Bradford won the Heisman at Oklahoma (2008), he was backed by two 1,000-yard rushers (Chris Brown, DeMarco Murray).

From 2006 to 2009, Oklahoma State's offensive balance (run/pass) was never separated by more than 26 yards. The 2007 unit achieved offensive football nirvana, perfect balance — 243.15 yards per game in rushing and passing.

"The numbers show you have to be good at both," said Dave Bartoo, the mind behind CFBMatrix.com. "You can't have one without the other. The numbers tell me you must have a running game."

No surprise, then, that Ohio State — one of the most balanced offenses in college football last season — won the shiny, new trophy.

"You've got to have a run game," Bartoo said. "As much as everyone loves the passing game, you've got to have efficiency to it.

"If you look at teams that played the fastest, there are not a lot of good teams in there. Other than Baylor, it's 'Who are these guys?'"

The teams that are the most offensively efficient — most points per minute — win championships, Bartoo contends. The last seven national champions have been in the top 10 in that category. Five of the seven were No. 1.

That kind of stat is not readily available, unless you dig below the surface. Analytics are beginning to reshape the game. Baylor — No. 1 last season averaging 87.5 plays per game — played in one of the Big Six bowls (Cotton). The next-fastest CFP bowl participant was Mississippi State (Orange Bowl) at No. 16.

For the record, Oregon — perceived as lightning quick — has finished in the top quarter nationally in that category only once in the last four years.

"It kind of opened my eyes," Bartoo said. "The game is approaching peak pace. The game can go only so fast without losing efficiency."

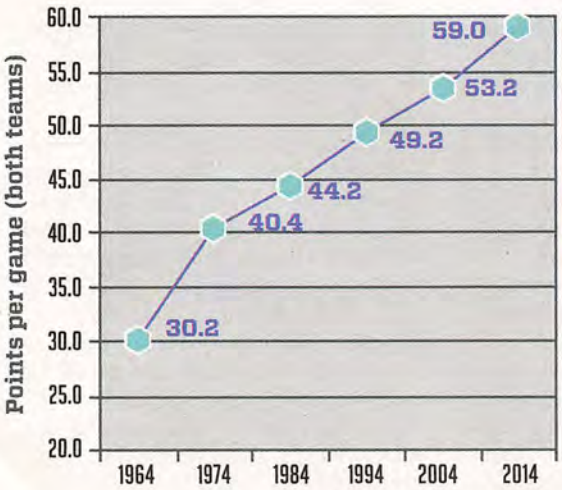
What better way to improve efficiency than to run the ball? It's trending that way. Last year, Bartoo said, the game moved slower (plays per minute) than it had in the last seven years.

Meanwhile, teams that ran more often than they passed on drives, scored 30 percent more often.

That leads to the rise of the likes of Ohio State's Ezekiel Elliott and Oregon's Royce Freeman. The two high-school blue chips faced off against each other in that first College Football Playoff championship game. Elliott responded with a career-high 246 yards and four touchdowns against Oregon. Freeman — a 1,000-yard rusher as a freshman — was held to 22.

One team played a third-string

A Point A Minute

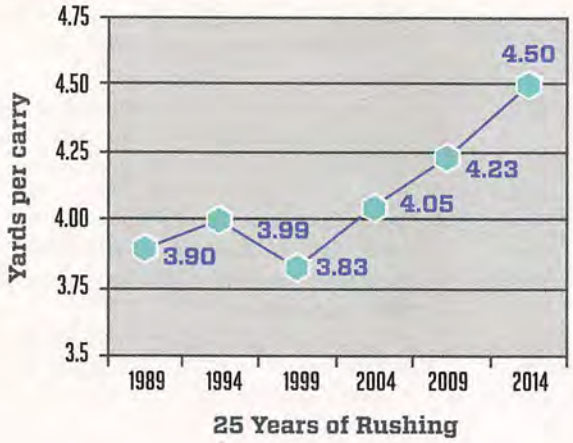


50 years of scoring

Oregon Ducks running back Royce Freeman

Photo by Scott Olmos-USA TODAY Sports

4.5 yards and a cloud of dust!



Georgia Bulldogs running back Nick Chubb

Photo by Jeremy Brevard-USA TODAY Sports

quarterback. The other had the Heisman Trophy winner. Didn't matter. The offensive line that had been embarrassed against Virginia Tech four months earlier, pile-drived the Ducks for 296 rushing yards.

Three rushers who led Power 5 conferences return. Oklahoma's Samaje Perine became the single-game record holder as a freshman with 427 yards against Kansas. New Pittsburgh coach Pat Narduzzi gets back junior James Conner. UCLA's Paul Perkins (1,575 yards) became the first Bruin to lead Pac-12 rushers in 13 years.

Elliott would be the Heisman frontrunner if it weren't for, oh, three teammates who play quarterback. The Indiana Hoosiers might not miss Tevin Coleman. UAB folded its program, but leading rusher Jordan Howard — 11th nationally — transferred to Indiana.

We haven't even gotten to Georgia, the SEC East favorite. Sensational freshman Nick Chubb stepped up to rush for 1,547 yards in Todd Gurley's injury/suspension-filled final season.

"In the college ranks, because of inconsistent quarterback play, teams are always going to want to feed the running back position," said CBS Sports analyst Rick Neuheisel, a veteran former coach. "In the NFL, the primary positions are the pass rushers and the guys who block those pass rushers — tackles."

Not to mention the pitch-and-catch aspect of receivers and quarterbacks.

"Every other position you just try to stockpile," Neuheisel said, including running back.

In the college game, it's still possible to physically dominate at one position. Wisconsin has gone to Rose Bowls and won Big Ten titles by developing tailbacks and intimidating offensive lines to spring them.

The Badgers have set the NCAA record for rushing by a tailback duo in each of the past two seasons. Melvin Gordon and James White piled up 3,053 yards in 2013. Last season, Gordon and Corey Clement went for 3,536 yards. That total was more than 119 teams.

If new head coach Paul Chryst doesn't mess it up, Clement should step right in to replace Gordon.

Urban Meyer's teams have finished out of the top 25 in rushing only twice since Florida's national championship year in 2006. Face it, Ohio State doesn't win it all unless Elliott emerges in December and January.

Elliott, a junior who had 141 yards in the first three games of 2014, went for 696 in the final three games of the season. What happened? An offensive line matured for one thing.

Meyer sat in his office during the offseason still lamenting that Week 2 loss to Virginia Tech.

"Their scheme was very unique," Meyer said. "Bear Zero. You can't run against it."

The Hokies basically stacked the box playing one high safety.

"Now we practice against it every third practice," Meyer said.

Was that enough of an adjustment? Ohio State got in the first College Football Playoff because of margin of victory, 59-0 over Wisconsin. Elliott then found his footing for what turned into a run of historic proportions.

"There was no tricking 'em in the last three games. There was execution at a high level," Meyer said. "It was also a product of our line improving. If that same offense that played against Virginia Tech played against Alabama, we'd be somewhere else right now."

The spread offense's wide line splits are a contributor. With offenses lined up sideline-to-sideline, defenses have to decide how to match up. The space created by those matchups creates, well ... space.

"In a spread offense, sometimes they open up bigger running seams," said Boston College coach Steve Addazio, a former Florida assistant. "Option football has always created bursts. It used to be just military academies (running that option).

"Urban's philosophy is to run the football. You get in the red zone. If you can't get in it, you're at a deficit."

Ohio State was a middling 83 percent in red-zone conversions before December. The Buckeyes then scored on 13 of 14 red-zone possessions in their three-game championship run. No Ohio State back had ever surpassed 200 yards in three straight games. Elliott went for 220 against Wisconsin, 230 against Alabama and a career-high 246 against Oregon.

"Those last three games something happened, things just started clicking for the offensive line," Elliott said. "Things really slowed down for me. In high school I felt like that."

Jim Harbaugh changed Stanford — and possibly the game — by going to a pro-style offense with resilient physical backs. That created the modern Stanford "brand." That is absolutely how the Wolverines are going to play under Harbaugh.

It's the way Alabama has played under Nick Saban. Alabama's last two championship teams (2011, 2012) were 12th and 11th in time of possession.

"Our philosophy is we want to be a physical football team," Addazio said. "When Boston College is good, they're big and strong and physical up front. We're not going to win a speed game."

REASONS FOR RAMADA

#37

"Guys Weekend"

THE LOWEST RATES
Always book at ramada.com
GUARANTEED

YOU DO YOUR THING. LEAVE THE REST TO US.®

At Ramada, we understand exactly why you left home to be here. So go ahead, do your thing. We'll do everything we can to ensure your stay is a great one.

ramada.com | 1.800.2Ramada

WYNDHAM REWARDS®

RAMADA® WORLDWIDE

©2014 Ramada Worldwide Inc. All rights reserved. Most hotels are independently owned and operated. A limited number of international hotels are managed by an affiliate. To learn more about the free-to-join Wyndham Rewards program, please visit www.wyndhamrewards.com.

Five truths about the running game in 2015

The triple option will propel Navy to its first conference title.

Perhaps not this year, but soon. Ken Niumatalolo's offense is going to be an annoying hiccup to be played in the middle of the American Athletic Conference season. The Middies, new to the league this season, have won at least eight games in six of Niumatalolo's seven seasons.

The dominant freshmen of 2014 will dominate as sophomores in 2015.

Here are two: Oklahoma's Samaje Perine (1,713 yards) and Georgia's Nick Chubb (1,547). Those are the No. 2 and No. 5 highest season totals returning from last season among Power 5 backs. In his 11th career game, Perine set the single-game rushing record (427 yards vs. Kansas). Chubb became the Next Big Thing at Georgia after Todd Gurley got all jiggy with his autograph.

Think what Ezekiel Elliott can do with a healthy left wrist.

Ohio State's sensational junior broke it last August, then went on to post the second-highest rushing total in Buckeye history (1,878 yards). The injury was so significant that Elliott had trouble blocking and DIDN'T stiff-arm.

We can't wait to see what Leonard Fournette does next.

Yes, *Lindy's* speaks for all of us. Fournette — 2014's No. 1 tailback prospect — went for 1,034 yards as an LSU freshman. He will be the centerpiece of a quarterback-challenged offense in '15.

Oregon is losing Marcus Mariota, so what?

The Ducks define the spread power running game. Oregon has scored exactly 42 rushing touchdowns in four of the past five years. In the other, 2012, it scored 48 to lead the country. While the quarterback situation sorts itself out, watch out for sophomore tailback Royce Freeman.

LSU Tigers running back Leonard Fournette

Photo by Troy Taormina-USA TODAY Sports

Arriving in 2013, Addazio inherited Andre Williams who led the FBS in carries and yards (355 for 2,177). More than the philosophy changed. BC went from 2-10 to 7-6.

"Stanford really caught my eye years back when Jim Harbaugh went back to that, the two-back power game. It's different," Addazio said.

Not so much when you consider the Big Ten has regained its dignity with the ground-and-pound philosophy. Wisconsin never changed. Michigan is about to change back. Michigan State's toughness is unquestioned with a 1,000-yard rusher in four of the past five years.

Still, with its toughness and balance, Ohio State is the team to beat.

INTERCHANGEABLE PARTS?

The position of running back has always attracted the most well-rounded players — sort of like shortstop on youth baseball teams. If you're the best player as a kid, you get to run with the ball.

Problem is, the NFL has figured out that so many players come out of college with the speed, moves, and general talent necessary to get first downs. As a result, running backs have become viewed as virtually interchangeable. Not so yet in the college game.

"The position is still glamorous and guys want to get the football," Neuheisel said. "I don't think we're going to run out of people who want to be a running back. But it's going to be easier to sell them on playing cornerback or another position."

There has become something of a disconnect between college and the pros at the position. Last year, Washington's Bishop Sankey — a second-round choice of the Titans — was the first running back taken after 10 defensive backs, nine offensive linemen and nine receivers, eight linebackers, four quarterbacks and four tight ends.

Among college's top three Power 5 conference rushers each year from 2010 to 2014, only two were drafted in the first round.

Alabama's Trent Richardson (Browns, 2012) has been a bust. Fresno State's Ryan Matthews (San Diego, 2010) has rushed for 1,000 yards twice. Six others in that group have been drafted in the fourth round or later.

Mamas, don't let your babies grow up to be Cowboys running backs. What does it say when DeMarco Murray — now with the Eagles — isn't re-signed by Dallas because of the cap hit?

"I don't know if we're going to go back to the glory days of the running back in the NFL," Neuheisel said. "I think that ship has sailed. ... Running back is a position where

there are a lot of quality players. I think it's a position where you are going to keep looking for (low-cost) guys."

That makes a guy like Oregon assistant Gary Campbell some sort of survivor. Thirty-three years in the game. Investigated by the NCAA. The former UCLA fullback has helped produce eight 1,000-yard rushers in the past seven seasons. Two have been All-Americans — Kenjon Barner and LaMichael James. Five of his backs are in the NFL. Oregon has set single-season school rushing records four times in the past six seasons.

"There's a lot of them that (still) want to be running backs," Campbell said. "We have camps here; there's more running backs than anything else ... but (the NFL) doesn't want to pay those guys a lot of money. It's not like a quarterback or defensive linemen, very difficult to find.

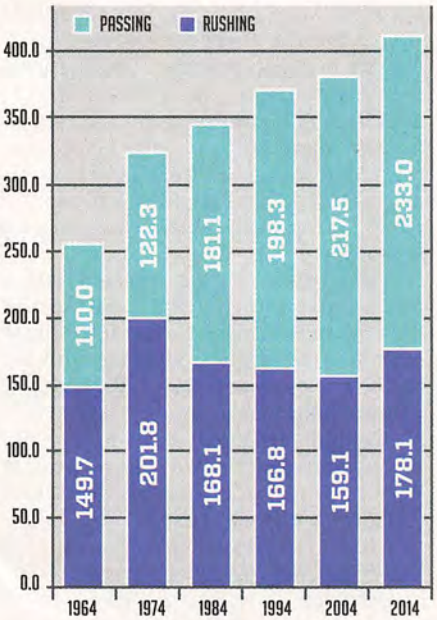
"There's so many candidates for running back."

All of it reflects an ongoing truth about the college spread-option offense: It can be a launching pad for power running. Rich Rodriguez did it at West Virginia. (Remember Steve Slaton?) Chip Kelly and Mark Helfrich refined it at Oregon.

Maybe the rest of the country is just catching up.

"Even though we were in a spread offense, our emphasis was unlike anybody else's in the country," Campbell said. "We wanted to run the ball first. If you can run the ball, you can control the game."

Total Offense Trending Up!



50 Years of Offense

Oklahoma Sooners running back Samaje Perine (32)

Photo by David Manning-USA TODAY Sports

In a big-time rush

Here are the 17 returning running backs who averaged more than 100 yards per game on the ground last season:

RANK	PLAYER	RUSH	YARDS	RUSH TD	YPG
1.	Kareem Hunt, Toledo	205	1,631	16	163.1
2.	Donnel Pumphrey, San Diego State	276	1,867	20	143.6
3.	Devon Johnson, Marshall	206	1,767	17	135.9
4.	James Conner, Pittsburgh	298	1,765	26	135.8
5.	Jordan Howard, Indiana (UAB transfer)	306	1,587	13	132.3
6.	Samaje Perine, Oklahoma	263	1,713	21	131.8
7.	Ezekiel Elliott, Ohio State	273	1,878	18	125.2
8.	Paul Perkins, UCLA	251	1,575	9	121.2
9.	Jarvion Franklin, Western Michigan	306	1,551	24	119.3
10.	Nick Chubb, Georgia	219	1,547	14	119.0
11.	Leon Allen, Western Kentucky	272	1,542	13	118.6
12.	Devontae Booker, Utah	292	1,512	10	116.3
13.	Larry Rose, New Mexico State	186	1,102	9	110.2
14.	Aaron Jones, UTEP	242	1,321	11	110.1
15.	Nick Wilson, Arizona	236	1,375	16	105.8
16.	Jocobi Owens, Air Force	204	1,054	5	105.4
17.	Michael Gordon, Arkansas State	159	1,100	13	100.0

Photo by Doug Holleman

TCU offense changed and fit Boykin to a T

By Dennis Dodd

Coaches tie their staffs, careers, and salaries to the schemes that define them. A bad decision can alter career arcs. TCU's Gary Patterson is a defensive guy, been that way his entire career. But something was missing after a middling 11-14 two-year start in the Big 12.

Defense still had to come first because that's what Patterson does. His defenses have finished in the top 18 in total defense seven times in the past nine seasons.

But to get with it in the Big 12, he had to change dramatically. So, he changed dramatically. In a sport full of upsets, Patterson decided to pull one of the league's biggest *before* last season.

The coach finally asked himself a question: "What don't you like to defend?"

That part was easy. All he had to do was look at his new conference.

Mike Leach hasn't coached in the Big 12 for five years, but remnants of his Air Raid offense still linger all over the league, to the point where there are only a handful of Big 12 schools that *don't* use it.

But it wasn't just any offense. He needed an offense that would be able to enhance his defense.

"That was a big reason for changing the offense," Patterson said. "You can still have a tough program. (Oklahoma coach) Bobby Stoops told me this, because he's done it. You can play defense and still run this offense."

Enter the perfect fire-starters for Patterson's remodeling of his offense. Hiring co-offensive coordinators Sonny Cumbie (from Texas Tech) and Doug Meacham (from Houston) to run the spread offense was one thing. Coaching up Trevone Boykin to actually execute it was another.

And the results were dramatic.

TCU had the largest national increase in average total yards and scoring from 2013 to 2014. Boykin became only the third quarterback since 2009 to average 300 yards passing and 50 rushing. The other two won Heisman trophies — Johnny Manziel and Robert Griffin III.

Talk about turnarounds. Boykin rode the new offense — or it rode him — to a fourth-place finish in the Heisman. The Big 12 Offensive Player of the Year was No. 4 nationally in total offense throwing for 3,901 yards (eighth nationally) and 33 touchdowns (seventh).

Depending on your taste, either Boykin or Ohio State's Ezekiel Elliott go into this season as the frontrunners for the Heisman. Boykin is for sure *Lindy's Sports* 2015 Offensive Player of the Year.

He traveled only 53 miles west from his West Mesquite High School to Fort Worth, but the "long and winding road" doesn't begin to describe how the lithe 6-2, 205-pounder got to this point. In 2012 as a TCU freshman, he was tapped on the shoulder two days before the Iowa State game and told he was starting. Starter Casey Pachall was headed to rehab. At the time, Boykin was a backup tailback.

Back then, all he worried about was to "give the seniors the best season they can possibly have. And have those guys put their arms around you and say you're our guy, we believe you. We trust you no matter what you do."

Boykin struggled overall, but did throw four touchdown passes against Baylor at the end of that season. When Pachall returned in 2013, Boykin moved to receiver (finishing fourth for the Frogs). In the 2014 preseason, his quarterback days again looked numbered. Highly regarded Texas A&M transfer Matt Joeckel arrived, but didn't

win the job.

Boykin found an offense that favored his speed, decision-making and arm. Joeckel remained in the background.

"When Coach Cumbie stepped on campus and we started working, I kind of felt like, 'This is for me. This is what I want to do,'" Boykin said.

As a full-time starter in 2014, a full-flower Boykin emerged. In an 82-27 strafing of Texas Tech, he threw for a school-record seven touchdowns. West Virginia coach Dana Holgorsen called him the most improved player in college football.

Heisman buzz intensified when Boykin went for 342 yards in total offense and four total touchdowns in a November showdown against Kansas State. A head-over-heels touchdown run that night was his Heisman moment — had he won it.

"I can do black flips all day," said Boykin, admitting to a gymnastics background. "I can't do a forward flip, but I did (that night)."

Said Patterson: "For two years people have been telling him he can't play quarterback and we'd never win. He's like anybody else I know with fire in him. They're going to prove people wrong."

In the offense-rich Big 12, TCU finally had some balance. The Frogs had a top five offense that averaged 533 yards and finished only behind Baylor in the Big 12.

Turns out Coach P had more common sense than stones in changing his offense. What else would *you* do with a back-flipping, high-flying, long-tossing dual-threat Heisman contender?

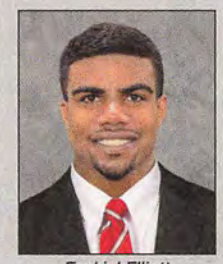
"We all knew that this was possible," Boykin said. "The coaches told us that this was possible. ... I kind of envisioned it this way.

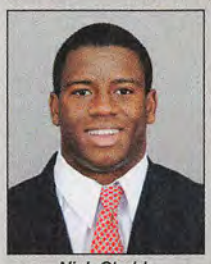
"We kind of laugh about it, joke about it because who would have thought? Nobody was thinking last year I'd probably be up (contending) for the Heisman."

Well, that was last year.

OFFENSE

Trevone Boykin


Ezekiel Elliott


Nick Chubb

Rashard Higgins

Laquon Treadwell

Evan Engram

FIRST TEAM

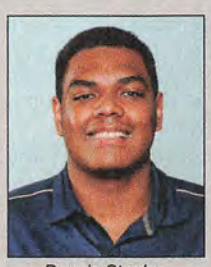
Pos	Name	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	School
QB	Trevone Boykin	6-2	205	Sr.	TCU
RB	Ezekiel Elliott	6-0	225	Jr.	Ohio State
RB	Nick Chubb	5-10	220	So.	Georgia
WR	Rashard Higgins	6-2	188	Jr.	Colorado State
WR	Laquon Treadwell	6-2	229	Jr.	Ole Miss
TE	Evan Engram	6-3	227	Jr.	Ole Miss
C	Jack Allen	6-2	295	Sr.	Michigan State
OL	Spencer Drango	6-6	310	Sr.	Baylor
OL	Ronnie Stanley	6-5	315	Sr.	Notre Dame
OL	Taylor Decker	6-9	315	Sr.	Ohio State
OL	Laremy Tunsil	6-5	305	Jr.	Ole Miss
PK	Roberto Aguayo	6-1	204	Jr.	Florida State

SECOND TEAM

Pos	Name	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	School
QB	Cardale Jones	6-5	250	Jr.	Ohio State
RB	Derrick Henry	6-3	242	Jr.	Alabama
RB	Royce Freeman	5-11	230	So.	Oregon
WR	Pharoh Cooper	5-11	208	Jr.	South Carolina
WR	Duke Williams	6-2	224	Sr.	Auburn
TE	Hunter Henry	6-5	250	Jr.	Arkansas
C	Max Tuerk	6-6	285	Sr.	USC
OL	Pat Elflein	6-3	300	Jr.	Ohio State
OL	Le'Raven Clark	6-6	316	Sr.	Texas Tech
OL	Cam Robinson	6-6	326	So.	Alabama
OL	Jack Conklin	6-6	317	Jr.	Michigan State
PK	Brad Craddock	6-0	189	Sr.	Maryland

Jack Allen

Spencer Drango


Ronnie Stanley

Taylor Decker

Laremy Tunsil

Roberto Aguayo

Photo by Joe Robbins

Bosa's NFL Future Worth More than a Shrug

By Ari Wasserman

Joey Bosa stood in the back of the crowd during Ohio State's national championship celebration at the White House in April.

President Barack Obama, who was offering many kind words to the team, had heard about the defensive end's signature move — the Bosa Shrug, a comically understated post-sack celebration. Obama wanted to see it.

So when the Prez paused in his talk, turned and made eye contact with Bosa, there was only one thing to do. Bosa put his arms out to the side and shrugged his shoulders. A second later, Obama re-enacted it.

Bosa laughed and gave a fist pump.

When the President of the United States does the Bosa Shrug ... well, let's just say life is pretty dang good right now for the Ohio State junior.

Bosa is the Florida boy who became the face of Ohio State's defense; the sack master who terrorized opposing offenses before becoming a unanimous first-team All-American; the quiet, yet funny personality who puts himself out there on social media; perhaps the most dominant defender in college football.

There's one more thing. Bosa is also the NFL-ready player who is only still in college because he has to be. If he wasn't, he would have enjoyed his time at the NFL Draft a week or so after the White House visit.

College is Bosa's inescapable reality for at least another year. He is entering his junior season, trapped in a world where he really has nothing left to prove. So what could possibly be next for him?

Well, for one thing, nothing about Bosa will look like he feels trapped in the Buckeyes' defense. Opposing offenses should be so lucky.

"I think he should be the best defensive lineman in America," Ohio State coach Urban Meyer said. "He's got a tremendous work ethic. He and (defensive line coach Larry) Johnson have tremendous chemistry right now, the way they're working. He's trying to take his game to the next level, which we all know is pretty high."

The next level? Meyer is talking about a player who had 13 sacks as a sophomore, which was only one short of the single-season Ohio State record set by Vernon Gholston in 2007.

The next level means becoming the most prolific sacker in Ohio State history — Mike Vrabel holds the record at 36 — and putting himself in the conversation to be the No. 1 overall pick in the 2016 NFL Draft.

Being a top-five pick is very likely, and getting to No. 1 could be reasonable. The last three defensive ends to be selected first in the NFL Draft were Courtney Brown (2000), Mario Williams (2006) and Jadeveon Clowney (2013).

Bosa is that good. He just doesn't like talking about specifics.

"I have my goals set," Bosa said. "Just to get better and be a great team this year again. I feel like if I just go out

and work every day, everything will fall into place. I obviously hear about (the NFL Draft stuff) and see it around, but it doesn't really get to my head."

Being in this situation would seemingly create a lot of pressure. Fear of injury, overuse or lack of production could all creep into Bosa's head as he plays through one more grueling season (read: 15 games, all the way to the end) before his big payday.

But there's a certain beauty about Meyer's team, a kind of bliss among the Buckeyes' best players. Take quarterback Cardale Jones, the third-stringer unexpectedly thrust into the starting role for Ohio State's postseason run. He never acknowledged — or perhaps even realized — what was resting on his shoulders. Then the Buckeyes won the national title.

Bosa isn't a quarterback, but he has the same trait. He doesn't act like he's thinking about the NFL or the sacks record or what could get in his way of making a ton of money.

You know, he just shrugs.

"You never hear him say he's going to be the first pick or anything like that," senior defensive tackle Adolphus Washington said. "Everybody knows what he could be, but you never hear him talking about it and never hear him bragging about it. He just wants to go out there and play football with us."

The 6-6, 275-pounder won't take plays off or hold back to guard against injuries — "That won't happen," Johnson said — as he prepares for the season to help lead the preseason No. 1 Buckeyes right back to the College Football Playoff.

Perhaps his down-to-earth mentality is because he "gets" all of this — he's the son of John Bosa, a former NFL player, and he went to a Florida high school powerhouse, St. Thomas Aquinas in Fort Lauderdale. He has the right mindset of taking football seriously, but not himself too seriously.

As for what's next? Well, Meyer wants and expects more, of course. But it's hard to fathom what more will look like.

"We'll write the story at the end of the season," Johnson said. "He has a chance to be a really special player."

DEFENSE

Joey Bosa

Shawn Oakman

Shilique Calhoun

Adolphus Washington

Jaylon Smith

Scooby Wright

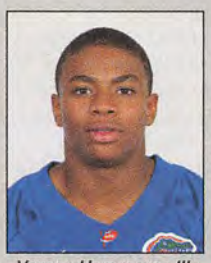
FIRST TEAM

Pos	Name	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	School
DL	Joey Bosa	6-6	275	Jr.	Ohio State
DL	Shawn Oakman	6-9	280	Sr.	Baylor
DL	Shilique Calhoun	6-5	250	Sr.	Michigan State
DL	Adolphus Washington	6-4	290	Sr.	Ohio State
LB	Jaylon Smith	6-2	235	Jr.	Notre Dame
LB	Scooby Wright	6-1	246	Jr.	Arizona
LB	Reggie Ragland	6-2	252	Sr.	Alabama
DB	Vernon Hargreaves III	5-11	198	Jr.	Florida
DB	Jalen Ramsey	6-1	201	Jr.	Florida State
DB	Kendall Fuller	6-0	197	Jr.	Virginia Tech
DB	Karl Joseph	5-11	197	Sr.	West Virginia
P	JK Scott	6-5	195	So.	Alabama

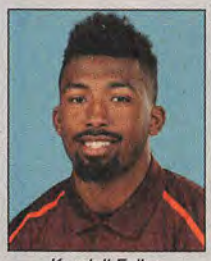
SECOND TEAM

Pos	Name	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	School
DL	Myles Garrett	6-5	270	So.	Texas A&M
DL	Emmanuel Ogbah	6-4	275	Jr.	Oklahoma State
DL	Robert Nkemdiche	6-4	280	Jr.	Ole Miss
DL	A'Shawn Robinson	6-4	312	Jr.	Alabama
LB	Eric Striker	6-0	223	Sr.	Oklahoma
LB	Su'a Cravens	6-1	225	Jr.	USC
LB	Myles Jack	6-1	232	Jr.	UCLA
DB	Zack Sanchez	5-11	175	Jr.	Oklahoma
DB	Jeremy Cash	6-2	205	Sr.	Duke
DB	Ishmael Adams	5-8	190	Jr.	UCLA
DB	Vonn Bell	5-11	205	Jr.	Ohio State
P	Tom Hackett	5-11	195	Sr.	Utah

Reggie Ragland


Vernon Hargreaves III

Jalen Ramsey


Kendall Fuller

Karl Joseph

JK Scott

QUARTERBACKS

Dak Attack: QB Prescott Takes Aim at SEC Title

DAK PRESCOTT

Photo by Michael Wade

Quarterback Dak Prescott is already the best Mississippi State player. Ever. He finished eighth in last year's Heisman Trophy voting as a junior and set 12 single-season school records.

And that success placed a target on his back.

The quarterback traveled to Panama City Beach, Fla., during spring break. He returned to Starkville with minor injuries. Prescott and two teammates were allegedly attacked by a group of men due to their status as MSU football players.

"It's life. There's perks to it; obviously, there's the negative side to it," Prescott said. "So it's just about being the best person I can, just live the life that's handed to me and make the most out of it."

No. 15 is also a target on the field, but Prescott enters his final season with eyes wide open.

He returned as a senior, vowing to improve upon Mississippi State's 10-win regular season and trip to the Orange Bowl. The team lost its two best defenders — linebacker Benardrick McKinney and defensive lineman Preston Smith — so the burden falls on Prescott's shoulder pads if the Bulldogs are to eclipse their best season ever.

"People still doubt us, that we won't come out this year and we won't do the same, or we won't get any better," Prescott said. "Our aspirations are only to be better ... and finish the season off that we didn't quite do last year."

Did we mention the No. 15?

As a college quarterback, in terms of size, ability and style, many have compared the 6-2, 230-pound Prescott to another No. 15 — former Florida Heisman winner Tim Tebow. That's a compliment. And know this: Prescott, even though he might not have been projected as a first-rounder in the 2015 draft, is an overall much better prospect than Tebow was (or ended up being) ... it's just minus all the other noise that went with the ex-Gator.

Auburn coach Gus Malzahn said Prescott has "some similarities" to another Heisman winner — Auburn's own Cam Newton, due to the Prescott's physical style and ability to pick up tough yards on the ground.

Prescott averaged 4.7 yards per carry while rushing for 986 yards and 14 touchdowns last season. He completed 244 of 396 passes for 3,449 yards, with 27 touchdowns and 11 interceptions, showing improvement in his accuracy. NFL.com analyst Gil Brandt, after studying the quarterback on tape, wrote in November that Prescott might have been the most improved player in college football.

Mostly, though, Mississippi State just loves Dak because he's Dak.

Coaches and players live through his belief. They point to his leadership in the 2013 Egg Bowl. Prescott hadn't played in three weeks. He entered the game in the fourth quarter against in-state rival Ole Miss and ignited a comeback win.

They look to his record five touchdowns in the 2013 Liberty Bowl, and to his guidance of Mississippi State last season to its first-ever No. 1 ranking.

"Here's a guy that knows what it takes when you're on the field to go win," MSU coach Dan Mullen said.

"We're probably the only sport in the world that the three months leading into the season the coaches can't be around the players with a ball on the field. ... So you need a guy like (Dak), that's going to make sure we continue to improve as a unit and as a team throughout the summer months."

Prescott arrived on campus five years ago a somewhat anonymous three-star prospect among a mediocre list of signees. Now, he's being looked to as the man who could bring Mississippi State its first SEC championship since 1941.

MSU has tried to make the leap countless times before and failed. Prescott gets a final shot.

"Five years ago I was just starting off. It's special," he said. "So to think I'm that old, it's a little surreal.

"But I'm enjoying every minute of it, just trying to make sure I lead guys and put everybody in the position they need to be in."

— Michael Bonner

TOP QUARTERBACKS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	**Trevone Boykin**	Sr.	TCU
	Another monster year at hand, given talented cast, 2nd year in system.		
2.	**Cardale Jones**	Jr.	Ohio State
	Those three starts were about as good as anybody has ever seen.		
3.	**Dak Prescott**	Sr.	Mississippi State
	Put up 341.2 yards per game of tough-guy total offense in '14.		
4.	**Deshaun Watson**	So.	Clemson
	We believe: A full season of Watson will lead Tigers to ACC title.		
5.	**Cody Kessler**	Sr.	USC
	Getting back to normal: A USC QB is the Pac-12's top Heisman candidate.		
6.	**J.T. Barrett**	So.	Ohio State
	Just saying ... If he were the starting QB, he'd be ranked right about here.		
7.	**Connor Cook**	Sr.	Michigan State
	A throw-back pro-styler who is 24-3 as a starter in past two seasons.		
8.	**Justin Thomas**	Jr.	Georgia Tech
	Triple-option wiz ran for 1,086 yards in leading Tech to ACC title game.		
9.	**Taysom Hill**	Sr.	BYU
	Can do it all when healthy, which hasn't been enough of the time.		
10.	**Jared Goff**	Jr.	Cal
	Strong-armed and few better mechanically; 7,481 passing yards already.		
11.	**Braxton Miller**	Sr.	Ohio State
	Clipboard carrier or something else? Would be wrong to exclude him here.		
12.	**Christian Hackenberg**	Jr.	Penn State
	Sophomore results were mixed — too many sacks — but pros still love him.		
13.	**Gunner Kiel**	Jr.	Cincinnati
	Former 5-star carved up Ohio State, has 8th-best returning efficiency.		
14.	**Josh Dobbs**	Jr.	Tennessee
	He brims with the "it" factor; Vols averaged 36.7 pts in his six games in '14.		
15.	**Keenan Reynolds**	Sr.	Navy
	Hats off to Reynolds, whose 64 rushing TDs most ever for an FBS QB.		
16.	**Jeremy Johnson**	Jr.	Auburn
	He's a freak athlete who should launch immediately in Malzahn attack.		
17.	**Marquise Williams**	Sr.	North Carolina
	Often took a beating last season, played hurt, still had 3,856 total yards.		
18.	**Brad Kaaya**	So.	Miami
	Had a 145.9 passing efficiency rating as a freshman. That's good, right?		
19.	**Kevin Hogan**	Sr.	Stanford
	Re-found groove in second half of last season; still has an NFL profile.		
20.	**Vernon Adams**	Sr.	Oregon
	Assume Eastern Washington transfer wins job, and that he'll be just fine.		
21.	**Mason Rudolph**	So.	Oklahoma State
	Pulled from redshirt, his 3 games, including Bedlam win, tease greatness.		
22.	**Jacoby Brissett**	Sr.	NC State
	Dual-threat Florida transfer picked off just five times in 370 throws.		
23.	**Brandon Doughty**	Sr.	Western Kentucky
	Can't ignore 4,830 yards, 49 TDs, 10 INTs, 167.1 efficiency rating.		
24.	**Seth Russell**	Jr.	Baylor
	With his arm and athleticism, heir apparent won't miss a Baylor beat.		
25.	**Paxton Lynch**	Jr.	Memphis
	6-7 junior passed for more than 3,000 yards, rushed for 13 scores.		

RUNNING BACKS

Versatile Freeman Ready to Soar for Ducks

Marcus Mariota is gone, but Oregon still has a dynamic player in the backfield capable of striking the Heisman Trophy pose.

Royce Freeman, who rushed for 1,365 yards and 18 touchdowns as a true freshman, headlines an impressive group of running backs for the new starting quarterback to lean on this fall as the Ducks reload for another run at the College Football Playoff.

ROYCE FREEMAN

Photo by Dave Sizer

During spring practice, the coaching staff challenged Freeman to become a more vocal leader and gave him some reps at slot receiver, with the idea of putting him and junior running back Thomas Tyner on the field at the same time in certain situations.

"I was blessed to be able to go that far and I'm just hungry for more," Freeman said of emerging as the featured back on an Oregon team that won the Pac-12 and pummeled Florida State in the Rose Bowl before losing to Ohio State in the first national title game of the playoff era.

"Especially since that was my first year, I feel like I'm going to get better and accomplish more."

During the 2013 season, Byron Marshall led Oregon with 1,038 yards rushing and 14 touchdowns. Last season — due to Freeman's impressive fall camp and a lack of depth at wide receiver — Marshall mostly switched positions and led the Ducks with 1,003 yards receiving.

Freeman, who had 16 catches out of the backfield for 158 yards and a touchdown, will still be used primarily at running back. Offensive coordinator Scott Frost also will have to find enough touches for Tyner (1,284 yards and 14 touchdowns in 23 games played) and speedy redshirt sophomore Tony Brooks-James.

"Royce obviously had a good year, but he's got some things he needs to improve on. We're going to give him a little bit bigger role this coming year," longtime running backs coach Gary Campbell said. "He's learning some things out at the wide receiver slot position, so we can get him and Thomas in there at the same time and be able to do some things with two running backs."

In addition to losing Mariota, Oregon must replace All-American center Hroniss Grasu, left tackle Jake Fisher and reliable left guard Hamani Stevens along the offensive line.

The team is counting on Freeman to help rally the Ducks, despite his youth and quiet demeanor.

"(Freeman's) in the long line of Marcus and Hroniss and guys that are just unbelievably great guys but too quiet for the overall greater good," said third-year Oregon head coach Mark Helfrich. "Just initiating a little more vocal leadership is something we've challenged him to do, and he's been phenomenal at practice."

Freeman's extraordinary season ended with a thud. The 5-11, 230-pound workhorse had only 10 carries for 22 yards during the 42-20 loss to Ohio State, while Ezekiel Elliott shredded the Ducks for 246 yards and four touchdowns.

"They were a great team. They're the best team I've played so far in my football career. They came out, they executed well and we didn't execute well at all," Freeman said. "They played more physical and they played better overall. There's things we need to work on."

Oregon is expected to contend again, with either Eastern Washington graduate transfer Vernon Adams or junior Jeff Lockie replacing Mariota behind center.

But a more experienced and motivated Freeman might be the Ducks' next Heisman contender and the player who pulls the team to those lofty heights.

"He's playing faster right now than he did last year," Frost said. "I think he's probably gotten a little faster, but he's also playing faster because of confidence. He's starting to be a real leader for us, too."

— Ryan Thorburn

TOP RUNNING BACKS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	**Ezekiel Elliott**	Jr.	Ohio State
	After magical postseason, won Sullivan Award as nation's top amateur.		
2.	**Nick Chubb**	So.	Georgia
	Bowling ball runs over defenders, doesn't tire, speed is underrated.		
3.	**Derrick Henry**	Jr.	Alabama
	Becomes Tide's top playmaker; that awaited breakout season is at hand.		
4.	**Royce Freeman**	So.	Oregon
	Looked ever quicker this spring, which doesn't much seem fair.		
5.	**Leonard Fournette**	So.	LSU
	Crank up the Heisman hype, for real. For sure, Notre Dame believes.		
6.	**Samaje Perine**	So.	Oklahoma
	Had FBS record 427 yards vs. Kansas on way to 1,713-yard season.		
7.	**Dalvin Cook**	So.	Florida State
	Top-flight vision and quickness; putting Rose Bowl fumbles behind him.		
8.	**James Conner**	So.	Pittsburgh
	With no help from passing game, 250-pounder bulled for 1,765 yards.		
9.	**Donnel Pumphrey**	Jr.	San Diego State
	Legit enough to rank higher, but have you seen the guys ranked higher?		
10.	**Paul Perkins**	Jr.	UCLA
	Somehow, his 1,575 yards were deemed 'quiet.' Pac-12 foes know better.		
11.	**Alex Collins**	Jr.	Arkansas
	Explosive runner looking for his third consecutive 1,000-yard season.		
12.	**Corey Clement**	Jr.	Wisconsin
	Next man up in Badgers' pipeline; rushed for 949 yards last season.		
13.	**Nick Wilson**	So.	Arizona
	Ran for 1,375 yards while missing all or part of four games to injury.		
14.	**Devontae Booker**	Sr.	Utah
	Augmented his 1,512 rushing yards with 43 receptions for 306 yards.		
15.	**Shock Linwood**	Jr.	Baylor
	Did his part on nation's top offense: 1,252 yards and 16 touchdowns.		
16.	**Jonathan Williams**	Sr.	Arkansas
	You know he's good for a grand. What if he didn't have to split carries?		
17.	**Devon Johnson**	Sr.	Marshall
	Led the nation with 8.58 yards per carry; can Herd be as explosive?		
18.	**DeAndre Washington**	Sr.	Texas Tech
	Under the radar while becoming first Tech back since '98 with 1,000 yards.		
19.	**Thomas Tyner**	Jr.	Oregon
	Has to fight for enough carries, but we still have a bit of a crush on him.		
20.	**Jalen Hurd**	So.	Tennessee
	Had 899 yards as freshman; will be part of dynamite combo (Alvin Kamara).		
21.	**Jarvion Franklin**	So.	Western Michigan
	First to be MAC Rookie of Year and Offensive POY in same season.		
22.	**Justin Jackson**	So.	Northwestern
	In shadow of other Big Ten backs in '14, but ran for 1,187 yards, 10 TDs.		
23.	**Kareem Hunt**	Jr.	Toledo
	Nation's third-leading rusher last season, 163.1 yards per game.		
24.	**Aaron Green**	Sr.	TCU
	Nicely moved to the head of TCU's committee of RBs late last year.		
25.	**Kelvin Taylor**	Jr.	Florida
	A flyer: He'll thrive in new O, even though UF has other good RB options.		

RECEIVERS

Quick Recovery Gives WR Treadwell, Rebels Hope

LAQUON TREADWELL

Photo by AP Photo/Aaron M. Sprecher

In that moment, everything seemed lost for Ole Miss — and not just the game against SEC West rival Auburn and a chance at the College Football Playoff.

Wide receiver Laquon Treadwell, one of the team's most important players, laid in the end zone of a silent Vaught-Hemingway Stadium, an ankle dislocated, fibula fractured, the injuries suffered while trying to score a potential game-winning touchdown.

That was November 1. And it was heartbreaking.

But by January 21, Treadwell posted Instagram videos showing him running on a treadmill. A month later, he was on the field turf in the team's indoor practice facility. He dressed for the team's spring game, even though coach Hugh Freeze had already made the call that his preseason All-American receiver was not going to play.

Still, it was all so encouraging. How did Treadwell, now a junior, recover so quickly from an injury that at the time felt tragic?

From the moment he was carried off the field, into an ambulance and toward surgery, Treadwell had one thought: "How long is it going to take for me to get back?"

"From the first night, I knew he was already focused on things in the training room," said tight end and friend Evan Engram. "I don't think he missed one little thing and was always on time to everything. I wasn't surprised at all to see him back on the field when he was, because that was his dedication and his love for the game."

Said Freeze: "Everybody who has wisdom in that tells me that everything looks great."

As much as the 6-2 Treadwell wanted to do everything his teammates did this spring, he was realistic about his own health — estimating he played at 80 to 85 percent of his full potential in March. Treadwell played his sophomore season at 229 pounds but was closer to 210 this spring because of the injury. For a physical receiver, those extra pounds can help him push through tacklers. He expects to gain back the pounds.

"There's a little hesitation. I'm not 100 percent, but I'm getting better every day," Treadwell said.

Assuming he's 100 percent by August, Treadwell is primed to have a huge season, which likely would be his last before departing for the NFL, where he's considered a top 2016 draft prospect. Treadwell, the nation's No. 1 wide receiver in the high school class of 2013, caught 48 passes for 632 yards and five touchdowns in nine games last season. Even those numbers don't really reflect his potential.

He had 10 catches for 103 yards and a touchdown against Auburn, his third 100-yard receiving game of the season, and he was sensational in the second half of a comeback win against Alabama.

Treadwell caught 72 passes as a freshman, but his low yards-per-catch average (8.44) fueled doubters. He proved most of them wrong in 2014; despite missing the final four games, he still finished ninth in the Southeastern Conference in catches and in the top 15 in yards and touchdowns.

Ole Miss, after Treadwell's injury, suffered losses to Arkansas and TCU, proving his impact on the team — not only on the field, but also off it. Treadwell grabbed a leadership role last season, going so far as to do the required push-ups with any receiver who drops a pass in practice.

"It was a learning process, for the most part," Treadwell said of the end of the season. "It happened, and I grew up. I learned from it, and the team went through a lot. There's a better focus with the team now than there was last year."

— Hugh Kellenberger

TOP WIDE RECEIVERS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	**Rashard Higgins**	Jr.	**Colorado State**
	Led nation with 1,750 receiving yards and 17 touchdowns last season.		
2.	**Laquon Treadwell**	Jr.	**Ole Miss**
	Big, physical WR well on his way back from gruesome leg/ankle injury.		
3.	**Pharoh Cooper**	Jr.	**South Carolina**
	His SEC-best 1,136 receiving yards in 2014 just part of do-it-all skills.		
4.	**Duke Williams**	Sr.	**Auburn**
	Could very well be the first WR off the board in the 2016 NFL Draft.		
5.	**Tyler Boyd**	Jr.	**Pittsburgh**
	Two-year totals of 163 catches for 2,435 yards and 15 touchdowns.		
6.	**Sterling Shepard**	Sr.	**Oklahoma**
	Sooners dearly missed his explosive playmaking when hurt late in 2014.		
7.	**Will Fuller**	Jr.	**Notre Dame**
	Emerged as star of unit last season with 76 catches, 15 for TDs.		
8.	**Nelson Spruce**	Sr.	**Colorado**
	Had monster year (106-1,198) following in Paul Richardson's footsteps.		
9.	**Mike Williams**	Jr.	**Clemson**
	Fantastic deep threat even more dangerous with Watson as full-time QB.		
10.	**Corey Coleman**	Jr.	**Baylor**
	Missed first three games, still finished with 1,119 yards, 11 TDs.		
11.	**Michael Thomas**	Jr.	**Ohio State**
	No OSU WR has hit 1,000 yards since 2002. That streak will end now.		
12.	**Josh Doctson**	Sr.	**TCU**
	Big target hauled in 65 passes for 1,018 yards and 11 TDs last season.		
13.	**De'Runnya Wilson**	Jr.	**Mississippi State**
	Tall, lengthy receiver just beginning to reach his really high ceiling.		
14.	**Cayleb Jones**	Jr.	**Arizona**
	Ex-Longhorn became big go-to target in first season with Wildcats.		
15.	**Leonte Carroo**	Sr.	**Rutgers**
	Hopes chemistry with new QB results in about 20 yards per catch again.		
16.	**KD Cannon**	So.	**Baylor**
	Speedy soph ended rookie season with 197 yards vs. Michigan State.		
17.	**Josh Reynolds**	Jr.	**Texas A&M**
	Rangy target was A&M's offensive MVP (52 catches, 842 yards, 13 TDs).		
18.	**Corey Davis**	Jr.	**Western Michigan**
	First-team All-MAC last season (78 catches, 1,408 yards, 15 touchdowns).		
19.	**Byron Marshall**	Sr.	**Oregon**
	Went from 1,000 yards rushing in 2013 to 1,000 yards receiving in 2014.		
20.	**Artavis Scott**	So.	**Clemson**
	Rookie season of 76 catches for 965 yards and eight touchdowns.		

TOP TIGHT ENDS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	**Evan Engram**	Jr.	**Ole Miss**
	All-SEC as a sophomore, tormented Mississippi State in Egg Bowl.		
2.	**Hunter Henry**	Jr.	**Arkansas**
	Helps with all the Hogs' running, and made 38 catches for 513 yards in '14.		
3.	**Austin Hooper**	So.	**Stanford**
	Stanford TE tradition is back: 40 catches for 499 yards last season.		
4.	**Bucky Hodges**	So.	**Virginia Tech**
	Set school TE record with 45 catches for 526 yards, seven TDs last year.		
5.	**Steven Scheu**	Sr.	**Vanderbilt**
	Full-service tight end earned second-team All-SEC honors from AP.		

OFFENSIVE LINEMEN

ND's Stanley Primed for 13 Bowl-level Efforts

Ronnie Stanley arrived for interviews following his final spring game dressed in a yellow tank top. He sat in the front row of Notre Dame's football auditorium, letting his "ND Family" tattoo show, inked after the BCS National Championship Game three years ago.

TOP CENTERS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	**Jack Allen** Was only non-senior among six Rimington finalists last season.	Sr.	Michigan State
2.	**Max Tuerk** All-Pac-12 as a junior and leader of maturing, talented USC line.	Sr.	USC
3.	**Nick Martin** Spent most of last season at guard, but his home is right in the middle.	Sr.	Notre Dame
4.	**Evan Boehm** Has made 40 consecutive starts and been to two SEC title games.	Sr.	Missouri
5.	**Ryan Kelly** Third-year starter gives the Alabama line plenty of stability.	Sr.	Alabama
6.	**Mike Matthews** A pro prospect, like just about everyone else in his family.	Sr.	Texas A&M
7.	**Jake Brendel** Fourth-year starter earned second-team All-Pac-12 honors last season.	Sr.	UCLA
8.	**Joey Hunt** 26-game starter, second-team all-league, helps kick Frogs into gear.	Sr.	TCU

TOP GUARDS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	**Pat Elflein** All-Big Ten returnee is proud leader of what OSU calls "The Slobs."	Jr.	Ohio State
2.	**Christian Westerman** Former 5-star recruit and Auburn transfer is a powerful run blocker.	Sr.	Arizona State
3.	**Landon Turner** Third-team All-ACC; had five games with 10-plus knockdown blocks.	Sr.	North Carolina
4.	**Greg Pyke** Becoming one of best in SEC; was a 295-pound HS lacrosse player.	Jr.	Georgia
5	**Joshua Garnett** No worries about Stanford's left side, with Garnett and OT Kyle Murphy.	Sr.	Stanford
6.	**Wyatt Teller** Ex-DL emerged on Tech's OL last season, he'll push for All-ACC honors.	So.	Virginia Tech

TOP TACKLES

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	**Spencer Drango** First-team All-American and semifinalist for the Outland last year.	Sr.	Baylor
2.	**Ronnie Stanley** Allowed just one sack last season as a 13-game starter at LT.	Sr.	Notre Dame
3.	**Taylor Decker** Buzz was he could have been a first-rounder had he left after last year.	Sr.	Ohio State
4.	**Laremy Tunsil** All the talent; getting healthy again after leg/ankle injury in bowl game.	Jr.	Ole Miss
5.	**Le'Raven Clark** Has started 38 games, helps pave a run attack that can't be overlooked.	Sr.	Texas Tech
6.	**Cam Robinson** Was first true frosh to start at LT for Nick Saban; now, he's the anchor.	So.	Alabama
7.	**Jack Conklin** Was impressive vs. Shawn Oakman in Cotton Bowl win over Baylor.	Jr.	Michigan State
8.	**Cody Whitehair** Is a two-time second-team All-Big 12 selection for the Wildcats.	Sr.	Kansas State
9.	**Kyle Murphy** Of course, a Cardinal is on this list. Of course, he's an NFL prospect.	Sr.	Stanford
10.	**Tyler Marz** Ohio State DE Joey Bosa said Marz might have been best he saw in '14.	Sr.	Wisconsin

Photo by AP Photo/Kevin Reece

RONNIE STANLEY

The star left tackle acted like he owned the place, which is just fine by Brian Kelly.

Hours earlier, Notre Dame's head coach called a pass play for the 6-6, 315-pound dancing bear that gained 14 yards and flattened cornerback Cole Luke. It was a parting gift from Kelly, one Stanley had earned during the previous four months, leading a dominant performance in the Music City Bowl, making a surprise return for his senior year and leading the offensive line through spring ball.

Stanley had begun to act like a professional. He was just doing it in college.

"That's beneficial to him, that's beneficial to us," offensive line coach Harry Hiestand said in the spring. "That's something as he got more confident in what he was doing, he could let that great talent that he has come out on every single snap."

That's pretty much what happened when Notre Dame ran 51 times on LSU in its bowl upset, matching the high mark of the Kelly era. The Irish mashed the Tigers' talented front seven with a first-time starting quarterback in Malik Zaire, who ultimately won Music City Bowl MVP honors. But it was Stanley who carried the bowl trophy out of the locker room afterward.

Stanley wants to carry a bigger trophy after his final season while leading a bigger Irish line that returns four starters from the Music City Bowl. Any carry-over success could test Kelly's preferred pass-first approach.

Stanley hopes it does.

"Just having the ability to run when we want to run the ball and to go at the pace we'd like to go as an offense, I do think that's a big change in identity from the year previous to now," Stanley said. "We know that if we want to be a championship football team we're going to have to run the football when it matters."

Notre Dame rarely did that last year with a middling run game so ineffective that Kelly shuffled four positions after three games. Stanley was the only lineman to keep his job, continuing as heir apparent to left tackle Zack Martin, who went in the first round of the 2014 NFL Draft and made the Pro Bowl as a rookie.

Stanley's pro prospects could hit similar heights if he continues to build on a strong offseason. He received a second-round grade from the league's advisory committee on underclassmen; not as high as he wanted, but also a message that he had not delivered enough even performances.

What is he focused on?

"Eliminating all the questions of whether I can do it for the whole game or just a few plays here or there," Stanley said. "I think I'm improving on being more physical and dominating, but I think I've done that before."

The level Stanley showed in the bowl was a performance powerful enough to change the trajectory of his career and Notre Dame's 2015 season.

That was part of the pitch Kelly and Hiestand delivered to Stanley when they flew to his home in Las Vegas to re-recruit him last January. Now the left tackle is so comfortable back in South Bend that he's lobbied his head coach for more action in the passing game beyond protecting the quarterback.

Based on his one spring game reception, cornerbacks and safeties, beware.

"Guaranteed first down," Stanley said. "I'll give you 50-percent touchdowns, too. Next time I'll score."

— Pete Sampson

DEFENSIVE LINEMEN

Baylor's Oakman Delays NFL for 'Unfinished Business'

Baylor defensive coordinator Phil Bennett and defensive end Shawn Oakman go back a long way. When Oakman was playing at Penn Wood High School in Lansdowne, Pa., Bennett recruited him while serving as Pitt's defensive coordinator.

Oakman collected 33 sacks during his last two years of high school, and Bennett knew the player could star at the college level.

SHAWN OAKMAN

Photo by Doug Holleman

"His uncle brought him to the University of Pittsburgh," Bennett said. "It was a Saturday and I lived right by the complex. Dave Wannstedt said, 'Get down here.' He was imposing, and I thought, 'Wow, I can work with that.'"

Oakman was also a physical presence in the paint for a Penn Wood basketball team that won the 2009 state championship and was the state runner-up in 2010.

"I was too aggressive," he said of playing basketball. "That's why I'm playing football right now."

The 6-9, 280-pound Oakman opted for Penn State but was dismissed after two years, in the spring of 2012, following a confrontation with a store clerk at a campus convenience store after his student meal card had run out.

Penn State defensive line coach Larry Johnson reached out to Baylor safeties coach Brian Norwood, who had coached defensive backs for the Nittany Lions from 2001-07. Bennett was thrilled to get a chance to coach Oakman after seeing him as a high school player.

"I said, 'Oh, I know him,' and it sort of fell into place," Bennett said. "The day he came down here it had to be 110 degrees. I said, 'This is not Philadelphia.'"

Oakman sat out the 2012 season because of transfer rules. When he regained his eligibility in 2013, Oakman was already 21 years old and hadn't played a down of college football.

Playing behind senior defensive ends Chris McAllister and Terrance Lloyd, Oakman put up solid numbers as a third-year sophomore, collecting 12.5 tackles for loss, two sacks and a fumble recovery.

"You sit out for so many years and wonder if you've still got it," Oakman said. "In my first few games, I didn't have it. I came along slowly, but surely. I feel I came a long way, but I still see myself growing every day."

After a tremendous junior year — 11 sacks, 19.5 tackles for loss, three fumble recoveries — he's one of the top defensive ends in the country with his eyes set on being one of the highest NFL draft picks next year.

Projected as a first-round pick had he declared early, Oakman surprised even many of his teammates when he announced before the Cotton Bowl that he would return.

"My future is promising on both sides of the NFL and college," he said. "But I have unfinished business. Looking at my body of work, it's not good enough for me to leave. The way I see it now is I haven't done anything spectacular. All the pieces have got to fall into place."

Bennett predicts Oakman will be one of the first picks in the 2016 draft, like defensive linemen Jadeveon Clowney and Ndamukong Suh were in recent seasons.

"You can look a year from now and you're talking about a Clowney or one of those guys like Suh or (J.J.) Watt, where he will test well and play well," Bennett said. "He's made progress, but he's not where he's going to be. I've told him this and I'm honest with him. Another year is what he needs."

Though he made third-team All-American, Oakman wants to become a more consistent player after disappearing during some stretches last season.

"There are plays that I completely dominate, but at the same time I could dominate every play," Oakman said. "I just have to keep doing what I'm doing and work on technique and fundamentals."

— John Werner

TOP DEFENSIVE ENDS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	**Joey Bosa** Even President Obama is doing the Joey Bosa celebration shrug.	Jr.	Ohio State
2.	**Shawn Oakman** At the top of the list of guys you never, ever, want to mess with.	Sr.	Baylor
3.	**Shilique Calhoun** Nice surprise to see Shilique The Freak back after All-America nods.	Sr.	Michigan State
4.	**Myles Garrett** And now, with the No. 1 pick in the 2017 NFL Draft ...	So.	Texas A&M
5.	**Emmanuel Ogbah** Big 12 Defensive Lineman of the Year, had 17 tackles for loss, 11 sacks.	Jr.	Oklahoma State
6.	**Carl Lawson** So, so ready to hit beast mode after ACL tear wreaked 2014.	So.	Auburn
7.	**DeForest Buckner** Size (6-7, 290) and athleticism at end; came on strong late last season.	Sr.	Oregon
8.	**Curt Maggitt** His return was big for UT, for his production and vocal leadership.	Sr.	Tennessee
9.	**Derek Barnett** Had 10 sacks as a true frosh; he and Maggitt combined for 35.5 TFLs.	So.	Tennessee
10.	**Shaq Lawson** Tigers lose Vic Beasley to the NFL; here is the next Vic Beasley.	Jr.	Clemson
11.	**Dadi Nicolas** Second-team All-ACC last season with 18.5 TFLs and nine sacks.	Sr.	Virginia Tech
12.	**Kamalei Correa** Last of his 12 sacks came on final play to preserve Fiesta Bowl victory.	Jr.	Boise State
13.	**Bronson Kaufusi** At 6-7, 265 is a big hybrid DE/OLB who can cover and rush (7 sacks).	Sr.	BYU
14.	**Hunter Dimick** Had 10 sacks in '14; trying for more without Nate Orchard on other side.	Jr.	Utah

TOP DEFENSIVE TACKLES

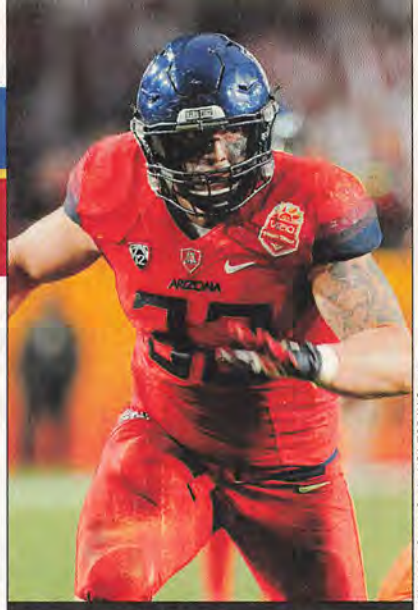
RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	**Adolphus Washington** Moving from nose guard to defensive tackle will boost his stats.	Sr.	Ohio State
2.	**Robert Nkemdiche** Ex-No. 1 recruit is a mismatch (size, quickness) vs. interior linemen.	Jr.	Ole Miss
3.	**A'Shawn Robinson** Absolutely swallows up space as key man in Nick Saban's 3-man front.	Jr.	Alabama
4.	**Andrew Billings** He's All-Big 12, strong as a bull, 300 pounds and runs a sub 5-second 40.	Jr.	Baylor
5.	**Anthony Zettel** Had 17 tackles for loss, including eight sacks, in All-Big Ten season.	Sr.	Penn State
6.	**Harold Brantley** Gary Pinkel compares him to ex-Tiger star DL Sheldon Richardson.	Jr.	Missouri
7.	**Sheldon Day** Brian Kelly loves his "work volume." Day can go, well, all day.	Sr.	Notre Dame
8.	**Kenny Clark** 2nd-team all-leaguer forms tough interior combo with Eddie Vanderdoes.	Jr.	UCLA
9.	**Montravius Adams** Leader of reloaded Auburn front; can get pressure up the middle.	Jr.	Auburn
10.	**Luther Maddy** Coming back from knee injury; had 13.5 tackles for loss in 2013.	Sr.	Virginia Tech

LINEBACKERS

What Will Arizona's Scooby Do for an Encore?

Arizona often holds practice at the school's former baseball stadium, across the street from the main football facilities. The outfield wall still stands, the batter's eye in center field now covered with a tarp depicting UA football's greatest players, including four College Football Hall of Fame defenders — Ricky Hunley, Chuck Cecil, Rob Waldrop and Tedy Bruschi.

Linebacker Scooby Wright, only a junior, is eligible to join that mural of All-Americans and major award winners ... a slice of glory that could be a bit awkward for a guy who prefers to play the reluctant superstar.



SCOOBY WRIGHT

Photo by Casey Sapio-USA TODAY Sports

"They were going to put my thing up there," Wright said of the coaches, "and I told them if they did, I was going to burn it down. I told them they are going to have to wait until I leave."

He has at least one more season after winning just about everything there was to be won as an out-of-nowhere sophomore, taking home the Chuck Bednarik and Bronko Nagurski awards for National Defensive Player of the Year, the Lombardi Award as the best defensive lineman/linebacker, and the Pac-12 Defensive Player of the Year award.

As a middle linebacker who played off the edge in pass-rushing situations, he led the country with 29 tackles for loss, including 14 sacks. He also forced six fumbles for the Pac-12 South champs, including the highlight moment that put Wright on the national map — his late-game "Scooby strip" of Oregon's Marcus Mariota to preserve Arizona's upset in Eugene.

Where can he be better?

"My coverage, my movement skills," said Wright, able to play inside or outside linebacker. "Just kind of little things I'm trying to pick up, like the quarterback's eyes."

With an established reputation, a non-stop motor that evokes memories of Bruschi, the great nickname — given to him at a very young age when his dad looked at him and said, "Oh, my little Scooby-Doo" — he's not a bad bet to be back in a tuxedo on the awards circuit in December. But repeating is hard to do, and falling short of his 2014 stats likely would be held against him, even more so if the Wildcats don't duplicate their 10-win regular season.

Arizona coach Rich Rodriguez, though, doesn't worry about Wright's head swelling too big for his helmet.

"He went to all those banquets, had all those chicken dinners and when he got home, he just went back into the weight room on his own," Rodriguez said.

The chip on Wright's shoulder is evident in his Twitter handle: TwoStarScoob.

That refers to his recruiting ranking when he was wholly overlooked out of Cardinal Newman in Santa Rosa, Calif. Arizona, meanwhile, got one look at him on tape and raced to the phone to offer him a scholarship at the end of his junior year of high school.

"It was one of those deals where you watch and you're like, 'He's got size; he's a tough guy; he runs around ... let's offer him and hope no one else does. Can we keep it a secret?'" Rodriguez said.

Scooby has a super story, but let's dispel a couple of notions: He's not small (listed at 6-1, 246, but a bit bigger now) and he's not un-athletic. While relishing the "David vs. Goliath" storyline — a tattoo on his right arm depicts the scene of David's triumph — he's not a gutty little overachiever.

He's a big-timer whose dreams of being an All-American linebacker and an NFL player date to his earliest memories of running around in the backyard with his dad.

"He loves football and has a passion for it," Rodriguez said. "That's the greatest example I can talk about in showing his success."

— Anthony Gimino

TOP INSIDE LINEBACKERS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	**Scooby Wright**	Jr.	Arizona
	Favorite player as a kid was ex-Arizona star Tedy Bruschi. Perfect.		
2.	**Reggie Ragland**	Sr.	Alabama
	Can do it all as the leader of a Bama D that has chance to be great.		
3.	**Myles Jack**	Jr.	UCLA
	Moving inside from outside. He's great anywhere. Returning kicks, maybe?		
4.	**Dominique Alexander**	Jr.	Oklahoma
	Third-year starter earned second-team All-Big 12 honors last season.		
5.	**Antonio Morrison**	Sr.	Florida
	Only concern here is he missed spring because of knee injury in bowl.		
6.	**Kelby Brown**	Sr.	Duke
	Sixth-year senior coming back from ACL; was All-ACC in 2013.		
7.	**Raekwon McMillan**	So.	Ohio State
	He's the Next Big Thing on a team flush with next big things.		
8.	**Ryan Simmons**	Sr.	Oklahoma State
	Spirited leader has 26 career tackles for loss for the Cowboys.		
9.	**Joe Walker**	Sr.	Oregon
	He's the guy who went 100 yards after that goal-line gaffe by Utah.		
10.	**James Burgess**	Sr.	Louisville
	Combines with Keith Kelsey to give Cards an experienced, talented duo.		

TOP OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	**Jaylon Smith**	Jr.	Notre Dame
	An elite athlete who thrives wherever Irish put him; 112 stops last year.		
2.	**Eric Striker**	Sr.	Oklahoma
	Lot of football and big plays under his belt — 17 TFLs last season.		
3.	**Su'a Cravens**	Jr.	USC
	Move from S looks permanent; he'll improve on his 17 TFLs from 2014.		
4.	**Darron Lee**	So.	Ohio State
	Former HS QB is now playmaking centerpiece of super Buckeyes' D.		
5.	**Leonard Floyd**	Jr.	Georgia
	Quick first step makes him a dangerous pass rusher off the edge.		
6.	**Terrance Smith**	Sr.	Florida State
	Season highlight was a 94-yard INT return for touchdown vs. Florida.		
7.	**Pete Robertson**	Sr.	Texas Tech
	Hybrid OLB/DE productive on Tech's shaky D: 14.5 TFLs, 12 sacks.		
8.	**Jordan Jenkins**	Sr.	Georgia
	Not quite as talented as teammate Leonard Floyd, but more consistent.		
9.	**Kentrell Brothers**	Sr.	Missouri
	Aggressive player had 122 tackles last season and knack for the big play.		
10.	**Joshua Perry**	Sr.	Ohio State
	Made 124 tackles last season for champs; wants to improve pass-rush.		
11.	**Ed Davis**	Sr.	Michigan State
	Fifth-year senior is as "toolsy" as almost any LB; ready for huge season.		
12.	**Tyler Matakevich**	Sr.	Temple
	Trying to become seventh FBS player to have 100-plus stops for four years.		
13.	**Jalen Reeves-Maybin**	Jr.	Tennessee
	High football IQ helped him make 101 tackles, with 11 for loss, last year.		
14.	**Nick Kwiatkoski**	Sr.	West Virginia
	Led Mountaineers with 103 tackles, including 11.5 for loss.		
15.	**Peter Kalambayi**	Jr.	Stanford
	Speedy edge rusher ready to blossom as next Cardinal star defender.		

DEFENSIVE BACKS

Versatile Ramsey Embraces Return to Cornerback

JALEN RAMSEY

Photo by Joe Robbins

Jalen Ramsey arrived at Florida State expecting to start in his first game as a true freshman.

Ramsey didn't enroll early. And he knew full well that FSU had one of the best defensive backfields in the nation. Yet he did what he intended: He started the 2013 opener at cornerback.

Ramsey moved to safety a few games later, excelling in that responsibility.

Then he took on the versatile "star" role as a sophomore in 2014, forcing fumbles, knocking down passes and punishing receivers en route to an All-American season.

It may seem a little silly that Ramsey is on the move (again) as he prepares for his junior season. This time he's moving back to corner. Why take an AP second-team All-American out of the playmaking star position? Well, because he's Ramsey.

He's as competitive as anyone at FSU. Now that the 6-1, 201-pounder is at corner, well, he wants to be an elite corner.

"I know when I line up against whoever it is, the best receiver in the country or the worst receiver in the country, (they're) not going to be beat me," Ramsey said. "That's how I am."

With juniors P.J. Williams and Ronald Darby declaring early for the NFL Draft, FSU coach Jimbo Fisher and defensive coordinator Charles Kelly had options as they planned for the 2015 secondary. They feel Ramsey would do well — and would probably be an All-American — at corner, star or safety.

It just made the most sense to put him at corner.

"I think he can be a dominant, dominant boundary guy," Fisher said. "Big, long, athletic, can run, take that side away, be a great blitzer off the edge, still allow him to blitz and play some run support."

Putting Ramsey at boundary corner (Williams' old spot) makes life easy for FSU. The safeties don't have to worry all that much about any receiver that Ramsey is covering. And, often, he will be tasked with the opponent's No. 1 receiver.

"When we have man-to-man, we barely have to look his way because he's locking down," safety Nate Andrews said.

In spring, it clicked. Fisher was pleased, praising Ramsey after nearly every practice. Not only has Ramsey made a seamless transition to corner, he also has set the bar quite high, including for FSU's receivers at practice.

"I'll embarrass you straight up in front of everybody," Ramsey said.

Confidence, as you can tell, has never been an issue for Ramsey. Speaking up has never been a problem, either. He naturally does it. He leads with words, but also with actions.

While he's an All-American player, Ramsey has made sure the rest of the secondary is strong around him. He's helping develop Marquez White into FSU's other starting corner. And Ramsey's old job at "star" will go to his roommate, Trey Marshall. They often watch film together, and Ramsey has become a coach to Marshall.

"You've been there, pretty successful at that position, I want Trey to be even more successful at that position," Ramsey said. "I know he can really ball."

Ramsey can ball, too. He had 79 tackles, 12 pass breakups and two interceptions in 2014. Ramsey was a one-man wrecking crew at Miami in November, forcing a fumble, blocking an extra-point attempt and sealing the 30-26 win with an interception in the final minutes.

But now Ramsey is ready to get back to corner.

"I love corner," Ramsey said. "That's where I always wanted to be. Of course, we had great corners here before me. (Now) I can just focus on one thing. Do my job to the best of my ability."

— Bob Ferrante

TOP CORNERBACKS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	**Vernon Hargreaves III**	Jr.	**Florida**
	He's the purest of cover corners, but returning All-American is physical, too.		
2.	**Jalen Ramsey**	Jr.	**Florida State**
	Has the size, skills and trash-talking ability found in the best CBs.		
3.	**Kendall Fuller**	Jr.	**Virginia Tech**
	The last of the Fuller brothers at Tech, he broke up 17 passes last season.		
4.	**Zack Sanchez**	Jr.	**Oklahoma**
	Picked off six passes last season en route to first-team All-Big 12 honors.		
5.	**Ishmael Adams**	Jr.	**UCLA**
	Pros won't like his height (5-8), but Pac-12 foes fear his playmaking.		
6.	**Cameron Sutton**	Jr.	**Tennessee**
	Has All-SEC talent and growing rep as someone to not challenge.		
7.	**Kevin Peterson**	Sr.	**Oklahoma State**
	A fourth-year starter who locked down West Virginia's Kevin White in '14.		
8.	**Jonathan Jones**	Sr.	**Auburn**
	Led the SEC in pass breakups last year with 17 in a breakout season.		
9.	**KeiVarae Russell**	Sr.	**Notre Dame**
	Big-time talent coming back after missing 2014 because of suspension.		
10.	**Mackensie Alexander**	So.	**Clemson**
	Freshman All-American already has elite lock-down skills.		
11.	**Blake Countess**	Sr.	**Michigan**
	Down year in 2014, but everything is re-born in Ann Arbor, right?		
12.	**Fabian Moreau**	Sr.	**UCLA**
	Jim Mora once called him a potential All-American. Had flashes in '14.		

TOP SAFETIES

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	**Karl Joseph**	Sr.	**West Virginia**
	Has been one of the nation's top thumpers for the past three seasons.		
2.	**Jeremy Cash**	Sr.	**Duke**
	Just the facts: 111 tackles, 10.5 TFLs, 5.5 sacks, 2 INTs, 4 forced fumbles.		
3.	**Vonn Bell**	Jr.	**Ohio State**
	Former 5-star really showed what he could do late after knee felt better.		
4.	**Dante Barnett**	Sr.	**Kansas State**
	Second-team all-league; the backbone of a unit that is K-State's backbone.		
5.	**DeVon Edwards**	Sr.	**Duke**
	From unknown recruit, to elite KR, to play-making DB (133 stops, 5 FFs).		
6.	**Jordan Sterns**	Jr.	**Oklahoma State**
	Hard-hitting strong safety posted 103 tackles, best among Big 12 DBs.		
7.	**Quin Blanding**	So.	**Virginia**
	Cavs' bright spot: His 123 tackles led the nation's freshmen.		
8.	**Jamal Adams**	So.	**LSU**
	Aggressive style and a bit of a showman, but he gets results.		
9.	**Jabrill Peppers**	Fr.	**Michigan**
	With "A-plus" spring, touted redshirt is on the launching pad.		
10.	**Nate Gerry**	Jr.	**Nebraska**
	Intercepted five passes last season, all coming against Big Ten foes.		
11.	**Jordan Simone**	Sr.	**Arizona State**
	Walk-on from Washington state turned into top-notch playmaker.		
12.	**Michael Caputo**	Sr.	**Wisconsin**
	Second-team All-Big Ten (media), with 106 tackles, four for loss.		

ALL PURPOSE

Trojans' Jackson Eyes Heisman Pose, a la Woodson

USC sophomore Adoree' Jackson's goals sound overly ambitious for a football player, but that only tells half the story.

"I want to win the Heisman Trophy," Jackson said. "I want to win the Thorpe (Award) and the Heisman."

TOP KICKERS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	**Roberto Aguayo**	Jr.	Florida State
	Has hit 48 of 52 field-goal attempts with range well past 50 yards.		
2.	**Brad Craddock**	Sr.	Maryland
	Big-legged Australian, a former punter, is reigning Groza Award winner.		
3.	**Josh Lambert**	Jr.	West Virginia
	Made 16 FGs of 40-plus yards last season, an NCAA record.		
4.	**Jaden Oberkrom**	Sr.	TCU
	Was 22 of 27 last season, and his last-play 37-yarder beat West Virginia.		
5.	**Andy Phillips**	Jr.	Utah
	'Automatic' Andy (40 of 48 career) is also 3 for 3 on onside kicks.		
6.	**Jake Elliott**	Jr.	Memphis
	Need a long FG? He has made six of 50-plus in his first two seasons.		
7.	**Rafael Gaglianone**	So.	Wisconsin
	Big kid from Brazil has NFL leg, hit 19 of 22 en route to cult hero status.		
8.	**Ross Martin**	Sr.	Duke
	Enters season having made 52 of 63 career FGs, with a long of 53.		

TOP PUNTERS

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	**JK Scott**	So.	Alabama
	Led nation in punting (48.0); Tide led in net punting, too.		
2.	**Tom Hackett**	Sr.	Utah
	Ray Guy winner led nation in punts inside the 10 (19 of them).		
3.	**Austin Rehkow**	Jr.	Idaho
	Consistent excellence: 47.8-yard average in freshman and sophomore years.		
4.	**Drew Kaser**	Sr.	Texas A&M
	Was an AP second-team All-American as a sophomore in 2013.		
5.	**Drew Riggleman**	Sr.	Arizona
	Improved consistency pushed him to fourth nationally (46.1-yard average).		
6.	**Peter Mortell**	Sr.	Minnesota
	Led Big Ten (45.1), then joked about launching Heisman campaign.		
7.	**Cameron Johnston**	Jr.	Ohio State
	Even the Buckeyes have to punt, and Aussie has 44.5-yard career average.		
8.	**Alex Kinal**	Sr.	Wake Forest
	No touchbacks in 81 punts helped Deacons rank fourth in net punting.		

TOP ALL PURPOSE

RK	NAME	CLASS	COLLEGE
1.	**Adoree' Jackson**	So.	USC
	Could have made our CB list, too, but skills fit better here at No. 1.		
2.	**Ryan Switzer**	Jr.	North Carolina
	Led team in receiving last season; had five punt return TDs in 2013.		
3.	**Isaiah McKenzie**	So.	Georgia
	"The Human Joystick" had three return TDs, blooming at WR in spring.		
4.	**Speedy Noil**	So.	Texas A&M
	WR/PR/KR led Aggies in all-purpose yards; off-field issues in the spring.		
5.	**Jakeem Grant**	Sr.	Texas Tech
	Only Big 12 player to have more than 900 receiving yards, 500 KR yards.		
6.	**Christian McCaffrey**	So.	Stanford
	No longer has small package of plays; Stanford says Ed's kid will do it all.		
7.	**Kalen Ballage**	So.	Arizona State
	Physical running back, kick returner, situational pass-rusher.		
8.	**Alex Ross**	Jr.	Oklahoma
	Ran for 595 yards and returned two kickoffs for touchdowns.		

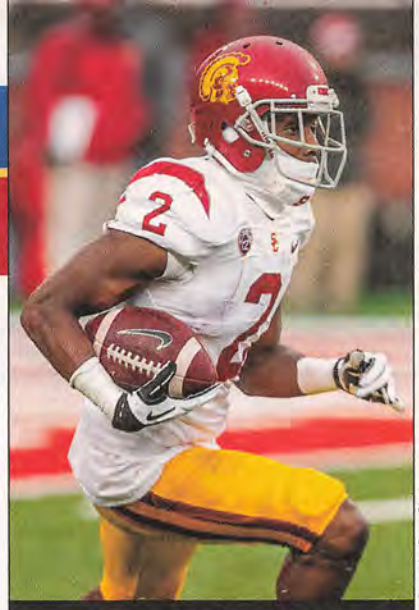


Photo by Dave Sizer

ADOREE' JACKSON

Winning the Thorpe as the nation's top defensive back sounds doable. The Heisman? That would be an extraordinary feat for a cornerback, but like the last defensive player to win it (Charles Woodson in 1997), Jackson also dabbles at wide receiver and is a returner.

"Actually, I don't think it will be hard for me (to win)," Jackson said. "I play offense, defense and special teams. Charles Woodson did it when he was at Michigan. That's how my mindset was set up when I came in to USC."

But Jackson's dreams don't stop there.

He also competes as a long jumper for the Trojans' track and field team.

"Being able to run track at the Olympics in Rio next year (is my goal)," Jackson said. "Just take a shot at that dream."

Say this: Jackson never limits himself. What's next? Quarterback?

Uh ... sure.

"You should ask (USC coach Steve Sarkisian)," Jackson said. "I wouldn't mind passing the ball or handing it off."

As you can tell, confidence is not a problem for young Mr. Jackson, who did not allow a touchdown pass until the final game of his true freshman season. He also caught three TD passes and returned two kickoffs for scores.

Jackson touched the ball 35 times in 2014 — and scored on five of them.

USC fans voted his 71-yard touchdown catch against Nebraska — when he caught a 1-yard pass and went 70 more for an electrifying score in USC's 45-42 Holiday Bowl win — as the Trojans' play of the year.

Perhaps the fans were also influenced by his 98-yard kickoff return in the same game.

"I believe the Holiday Bowl was a good glimpse," he said of his Heisman campaign.

The biggest issue for Sarkisian is figuring out how much to use him offensively; the 5-11, 185-pound Jackson is already the Trojans' best cornerback.

"We're going to have to be very strategic when we go into games of exactly how we're going to use him," Sarkisian said. "It will be different than it was a year ago because he has more volume. He has more offense that he can understand.

"We can do more with him on defense (as well). That doesn't mean he can go out and play 180 plays. We just have to be smart with him. ... There'll be games where we'll see him more on offense than maybe others. It's going to be (about) matchups. It's going to be game plans."

Part of being smart also includes managing his track career. Jackson was disappointed he wasn't allowed to skip USC's spring football and focus only on track, where he also ran on the 4x400-meter relay team. Sarkisian refused his request, but Jackson said he will try again next spring to do track only.

"That's one of the things we have to talk about. It just depends on how this season goes, actually," said Jackson, a Belleville, Ill., native who was a *Parade* All-American at Serra High School in Gardena, Calif.

Despite the track stuff and the attention Jackson gained from his offensive and special teams' touches, he knows his future revolves around being an NFL defender. He had 49 tackles, including four for losses, and 10 deflections last season, earning Freshman All-American honors from various publications.

"God-willing, if I get drafted; I want to play corner," he said. "That probably would be the best position for me. That's just how I feel, how I see it."

— Scott Wolf

UNIT RANKINGS

TOP 10 BACKFIELD

This is how we do it: A team has to be stacked at quarterback AND running back to even get on the watch list to make the cut. Why do we do it this way? We think it's a lot more interesting than just ranking the best units at quarterback and running back, which often would simply mirror our player rankings.

1. OHIO STATE

Expect anything different? Cardale Jones, J.T. Barrett, Braxton Miller ... in no college football offseason has a single program's quarterback "problem" ever looked so promising. And let's face it — a stiff-of-stiffs could hand off to Ezekiel Elliott with great success. No need to linger here. The Buckeyes have the nation's best backfield, and everyone knows it.

2. TCU

With just about everyone back on offense for the Horned Frogs, there won't be any reason why Trevone Boykin, in his second year in the spread offense and presumably even more comfortable, can't lead the offense past the stunning 46.5 points per game it averaged last season. TCU considers at least three of its running backs as being starter-worthy — Aaron Green, Kyle Hicks, Trevorris Johnson — and fresh legs are good in this fast-paced college football world.

3. USC

Cody Kessler is going to go deep more often and play faster as the Trojans settle in to the second year of coach Steve Sarkisian. Kessler passed for 3,826 yards and 39 touchdowns last season and has young, talented receivers to throw to (JuJu Smith, emerging Steven Mitchell) and ample backfield options, even with Buck Allen turning pro. Justin Davis and Tre Madden will do the work there.

4. OREGON

Yes, as you can tell by our No. 4 national ranking of the Ducks, we're pushing all in on Eastern Washington transfer quarterback Vernon Adams. Royce Freeman, Thomas Tyner and buzz-worthy redshirt freshman Tony Brooks-James form a loaded backfield. Byron Marshall, converted to receiver, probably still knows his running backs reads in case he's needed in a pinch.

5. OKLAHOMA

The Sooners aren't saying who is going to play quarterback, but Trevor Knight or Texas Tech transfer Baker Mayfield are a better pair than most teams have, so that's not a bad place to start. (The smart money is on Mayfield, by the way). What's even more enviable is the running back depth — Samaje Perine, Joe Mixon and Alex Ross. Mixon was supposed to be the star newcomer in 2014 before a season-long suspension, ceding the stage to the bull-strong Perine.

6. NOTRE DAME

The Irish will enter training camp with a dynamic, deserving starter at quarterback in Everett Golson or Malik Zaire. If C.J. Prosise pulls off a conversion from receiver to running back — and spring indications were tantalizingly positive — he could blow up into a star. Either way, he'll be a lightning bolt somewhere in the offense, and Tarean Folston and Greg Bryant are still around to handle the handoffs. Options. It's nice to have options.

7. TENNESSEE

QB Josh Dobbs will be a full-blown star this season. Jalen Hurd did his part last season in an amazing wave of freshman running backs across the country, rushing for 899 yards. He has company this season. Running back Alvin Kamara, an Alabama transfer by way of junior college, is pegged by us as the top newcomer in the SEC.

CARDALE JONES

Photo by RD Moore

8. CAL

Coach Sonny Dykes calls Jared Goff "an elite-level quarterback" and we do not disagree. Goff has passed for 7,481 yards in his two seasons, and when scouts write up their reports, they will wear out the term "arm talent." Meanwhile, Daniel Lasco hit 1,115 rushing yards last season — more than 500 of which came in the last four games.

9. ARKANSAS

The Razorbacks have 1,000-yard backs in Jonathan Williams and Alex Collins, complemented by an experienced quarterback, Brandon Allen, who is appropriately careful with the ball. He was intercepted just five times last season, so bonus points for knowing his role.

10. PENN STATE

It's Akeel Lynch's time to shine at running back. NFL-armed Christian Hackenberg will be glad to have the help.

TOP 10 RECEIVERS

1. BAYLOR

Corey Coleman emerged as the Bears' go-to guy last season, making 64 catches for 1,119 yards, but speedy KD Cannon was right on his heels as a true freshman, with 58 catches for 1,030 yards and eight scores. That they might be the best pair of receivers in the country is worth noting, but what separates the Bears is how far down they go on the depth chart without a major drop-off: Jay Lee, Lynx Hawthorne, Davion Hall, Quan Jones, Chris Platt, Ishmael Zamora ...

2. NOTRE DAME

Will Fuller and Corey Robinson lead a group with great size, strong work ethic and underrated toughness. Stretching defenses won't be a problem, nor will snaring balls in traffic and blocking on the outside. Good stuff.

3. CLEMSON

Mike Williams is an All-ACC talent, and sophomore Artavis Scott is a field-stretcher along the lines of a Sammy Watkins. If that sounds like hyperbole, check back with us at this time next season. Behind them, incoming freshmen Deon Cain and Ray-Ray McCloud are expected to make an impact for superstar QB Deshaun Watson.

4. OHIO STATE

Michael Thomas is a traditional leading guy. He is well-rounded. Can do it all. No issues there. Some-

body does have to replace Devin Smith's deep threat (Cory Smith?), but options and versatility abound with this group. Extreme athletes Jalin Marshall and Dontre Wilson can line up at H-back or outside, catch the ball in space and make magic happen.

5. TEXAS A&M

The Aggies can go Speedy (Noil) and they can go big (6-5 Ricky Seals-Jones). They can go proven (All-SEC junior Josh Reynolds) and they can trot out yet another amazing recruit (early-enrolled Christian Kirk). Best quality, depth in the SEC.

6. CAL

Kenny Lawler is part acrobat, leading the Bears last season with 54 catches for 701 yards and nine touchdowns. If those numbers sound a bit modest by modern standards, it's because Jared Goff has eyes for all of his targets. Pretty much all of them are back — Bryce Treggs, Stephen Anderson, Maurice Harris, Trevor Davis, Darius Powe. That's 167 catches right there.

7. ARIZONA

Cayleb Jones is one of those elite go-up-and-snag-the-ball-at-its-highest-point kind of guys. He'll lead the way in a mix-and-match group that has waterbugs and speedsters ... and The Kid's kid (junior Trey Griffey) is getting better all the time, too.

8. TENNESSEE

Perhaps lacking in star power, but this position group will end up being a team strength that works well with QB Josh Dobbs, who has tall red-zone targets in Marquez North and Jason Croom. Von Pearson and Pig Howard are returning starters, and sophomore tight end Ethan Wolf is on his way to stardom.

9. OLE MISS

Wide receiver Laquon Treadwell. Tight end Evan Engram. Can't go wrong with a couple of All-Americans.

10. OKLAHOMA STATE

Nine of the top 10 pass-catchers from last season return, and now they get to work for a whole season with QB Mason Rudolph.

TOP 10 OFFENSIVE LINE

1. OHIO STATE

Guard Pat Elflein and tackle Taylor Decker are the stars. Billy Price is coming on like gangbusters, with a huge spring that had everyone talking about his play as much as his raw strength. Jacoby Boren

Corey Coleman

Photo by Manny Flores Cal Sport Media via AP Images

likewise is a returning starter. Read it and weep, all non-Ohio State fans. This is basically the same group that led the way for 878 rushing yards in the stunning three-game postseason run. One starts to wonder how the Buckeyes' offense can possibly go wrong. Don't bother thinking about it too hard.

2. BAYLOR

Left tackle Spencer Drango, who grew up north of Austin, Texas, would have loved to be a Longhorn, but the Texas staff only made a futile push after he had committed to Baylor. That says plenty about how the fortunes of the programs have changed in recent years. Drango, a fourth-year starter at left tackle, is an All-American, leading a line that returns intact from the nation's most prolific offense. Also back: tackle Pat Colbert, guards Blake Muir and Jarell Broxton, and center Kyle Fuller.

3. MICHIGAN STATE

As long as the Jacks are around — center Allen and tackle Conklin — the Spartans will have an intimidating offense to match their always-brutish defense. Allen earned first-team All-Big Ten honors from the league coaches last season; Conklin was a second-team choice.

4. NOTRE DAME

Left tackle Ronnie Stanley and center Nick Martin are up there with any pair, anywhere. Overall, this is the deepest group of linemen that Brian Kelly has had at Notre Dame since arriving for the 2010 season. The Irish will maul many a defense in 2015.

5. ARKANSAS

The Hogs are kind of turning into the Stanford of the South. Is that a thing? Arkansas will go heavy and pound opponents, going counter-culture to the modern spread offense. The scheme fits the personnel, and the personnel fits the scheme. A line with four returning starters — Dan Skipper, Sebastian Tretola, Mitch Smothers and Denver Kirkland — is able to clear space when everyone in the stadium knows the run is coming.

6. TCU

Four starters return from a line that went from mystery to mainstay across the brilliant course of last season for the Horned Frogs. Two players — center Joey Hunt and tackle Halapoulivaati Vaitai — earned second-team All-Big 12 honors. Vaitai has moved to the left side this season to fill the one vacancy, and sophomore Joseph Noteboom is stepping up on the right side. Overall, TCU returns linemen who have a combined 98 career starts.

7. GEORGIA

The Bulldogs never lacked for a running back last season, Nick Chubb replacing Todd Gurley, and Georgia led the SEC with 257.8 rushing yards per game. It's time to give all due respect to guys like tackle John Theus and guard Greg Pyke.

8. ALABAMA

You can't quibble with sophomore left tackle Cam Robinson and senior center Ryan Kelly, among the best nationally at their positions. They are the only returning starters in the group, although the line came together nicely in the spring. Nick Saban even offered public atta-boys to senior right tackle Dominick Jackson, a former junior college transfer known for blocking out the sun in the run game. Redshirt freshman left guard Ross Pierschbacher, from Cedar Falls, Iowa, is going to be a good one.

9. LSU

This is just what you would expect. The Tigers have plenty of guys who look good right off the bus. Tackles Jerald Hawkins and Vadal Alexander, and center Ethan Pocic, are candidates for postseason conference honors. Hawkins flipped from right tackle to left tackle this spring, with Alexander taking Hawkins' old spot after playing guard.

10. UCLA

Don't be fooled by last season's average of 3.15 sacks allowed per game — those were often as much on QB Brett Hundley's indecision as anything ... although, we admit to being fooled by the Bruins' line before, thinking it was all grown up before it really was. Well, again, it looks all grown up. Senior center Jake Brendel and junior guard Alex Redmond are two standouts; 2013 starter Simon Goines returns from a redshirt year; and junior college transfer Zach Batemen figures to be in the mix somewhere, too. What could go wrong?

UNIT RANKINGS

TOP 10 DEFENSIVE LINE

1. OHIO STATE

We'll take Joey Bosa and Adolphus Washington and meet you in any dark alley, OK? Bosa, you know. The standing back-flips. The long, flowing hair (oops, sorry, that was gone this spring). The post-sack shrug. He had 21 tackles for loss and 13.5 sacks last season. Washington had 10.5 and 4.5, mostly playing at nose guard, but he'll move over to defensive tackle, more of a playmaking spot, to replace departed Michael Bennett. Maybe the other two spots on the line end up by-committee, but you don't see Urban Meyer sweating it. Seriously, the skill level is just scary. It's a bad year to be an opposing quarterback in the Big Ten.

2. ALABAMA

The Crimson Tide's line doesn't have to concede much at all to Ohio State's in terms of quality and depth, but it also can't do much crowing, considering the 281 rushing yards allowed to the Buckeyes in a national semifinal last season. Nothing to do about that now except turn it into motivation and hope for a rematch. Alabama's best chance of getting back to those playoffs is through an hellacious defensive front seven, and the best part of that hellacious front seven is a line led by Jonathan Allen, Jarran Reed and A'Shawn Robinson. Quality reserves abound: Dalvin Tomlinson, D.J. Pettway, Da'Shawn Hand, Darren Lake ... and whatever other five-stars Saban keeps in his back pocket. We should mention that Alabama allowed only five rushing touchdowns last season.

3. BAYLOR

The Bears return their entire starting front four, including Shawn Oakman, who inspired wickedly funny internet memes last winter due to his imposing physical stature capable, as one suggested, of intimidating Liam Neeson into giving up the search for his kidnapped daughter (look it up, folks). It's also best to probably not mess with All-Big 12 tackle Andrew Billings, tackle Beau Blackshear, or ends Jamal Palmer and K.J. Smith. Oakman and his sidekicks allowed just 117.7 rushing yards per game.

4. MICHIGAN STATE

Everyone knows about end Shilique "The Freak" Calhoun, who — let's be honest — needs to be even better to live up to that nickname. Standards are such that 12.5 tackles for loss, including eight sacks, was something of a "meh" season for Calhoun. Nice to have standards. Versatile linemate Lawrence Thomas is equally freaky.

5. OLE MISS

Robert Nkemdiche is used to the spotlight, first as the No. 1 recruit in the nation in the 2013 class, then as part of last season's No. 1 scoring defense and certainly as a guy who always has demanded special attention from offensive linemen. Whatever he lacks in eye-popping stats, he makes up for by allowing teammates — like end Marquis Haynes and nose tackle Issac Gross — to have more freedom to roam.

6. VIRGINIA TECH

A Hokies' resurgence is closely tied to how dang good this group can be. Defensive tackle Luther Maddy returns from injury. Standouts Dadi Nicolas and Ken Ekanem return after landing on the ACC's all-conference teams last season. An opener against defending national champ Ohio State (and our No. 1-rated offensive line) awaits.

7. PENN STATE

Undersized tackle Anthony Zettel has a motor that never shuts off. His 17 tackles for loss last season had a way of making those around him work harder, and when it was all over, Penn State had the No. 3 rushing defense in the country. The Lions looked deep and dominant again this spring.

8. TCU

The Frogs allowed an average of 2.78 yards per rush last season, the best mark in the country. Big man Chucky Hunter is gone, but the rest of the crew is back — Mike Tuaua, Josh Carraway, James McFarland, Davion Pierson, etc. — and Nebraska transfer Aaron Curry joins a deep rotation at tackle. Good times.

VERNON HARGREAVES III

Photo by Mark LoMoglio Icon Sportswire via AP Images.

9. AUBURN

The big thing here is the addition of coordinator Will Muschamp. Well, that, and the return from injury of end Carl Lawson. Muschamp will get these guys playing hard, attacking, and the Tigers won't be the pushovers they were last season. Veteran defensive tackle Montravius Adams, among others, and a wave of youth (Dontavius Russell, among others) helps fuel the turnaround.

10. NOTRE DAME

Sheldon Day and Jarron Jones could be the most imposing duo of senior tackles in the country. The spring emergence of early-enrolled 300-pounder Jerry Tillery eased depth concerns inside. We'll peg returning starting defensive end Isaac Rochell for a breakout season.

TOP 10 LINEBACKERS

1. OHIO STATE

Add new inside starter Raekwon McMillan to senior Joshua Perry and the hugely promising Darron Lee on the outside, and — is this over the top? — these guys should just be moved to the NFL as a unit right now. Lee loves to tease McMillan by calling him "Chosen One" — a notion that was not dispelled last season when the five-star recruit saw considerable playing time. McMillan is more athletic than the guy he's replacing in the lineup — Curtis Grant — so here's just another area in which Ohio State looks better than last season. On a team with no weaknesses, linebacker is a particular strength.

2. GEORGIA

The Dawgs' four-man group features one of the best pair of outside linebackers in the country in junior Leonard Floyd and senior Jordan Jenkins, both high-motor pass rushers. That's nice. But what to do with sophomore outside linebacker Lorenzo Carter? Such tough decisions for second-year coordinator Jeremy Pruitt, who could slide one of the trio inside or move someone closer to the action with their hand in the dirt.

3. ALABAMA

Reggie Ragland takes over as the leader of the unit, a senior who has earned Nick Saban's trust. He packs a wallop on defense, but not like Reuben Foster, a junior and former No. 1 high school inside linebacker prospect who is trying to translate his fury on special teams to the discipline of Saban's D. A deep, talented corps is further explanation for why this defense could be Bama's best since 2011.

DEFENSE

4. NOTRE DAME

Jaylon Smith is a major talent. Joe Schmidt and Jarrett Grace — impressively, back from a terrible knee injury — are experienced and tough. Nyles Morgan is an exciting up-and-comer. The run D will be stout.

5. OKLAHOMA

Eric Striker is a great pass rusher, with 15.5 sacks and 27.5 tackles for loss in the past two years. Junior Dominique Alexander is a two-year starter who earned second-team all-conference honors last season. Inside 'backer Jordan Evans is another returning starter who made 93 tackles last season.

6. UCLA

Myles Jack can be whatever he wants. He's dabbled, spectacularly, at running back. His coverage skills are such that he can play safety or, ahem, cornerback. Coach Jim Mora wants him at inside linebacker in the Bruins' base this season, making him an unavoidable hub in the middle. Whatever. Just line him up and enjoy the athletic freak show. Elsewhere, Butkus Award winner Eric Kendricks is gone, but sophomore Kenny Young is promising and pass-rushing outside linebacker Deon Hollins made nine sacks last season.

7. USC

This is where Su'a Cravens lives now. It's hard to peg the talented junior, a former safety, into just one position, other than to say he's just a *football player*. Middle linebacker Lamar Dawson was impressive in spring on his way back from knee problems. Anthony Sarao will be a third-year starter, if he holds off talented young dudes.

8. OREGON

The Ducks have all kind of versatile, athletic linebackers, including a quartet of seniors — Joe Walker, Rodney Hardrick, Tyson Coleman and Christian French. Oregon likes to rotate, and it has the depth to do it. (We do have to note the Pac-12's overall strength at linebacker, as Arizona State and Stanford just missed our cut, and Arizona has Scooby Wright.)

9. LOUISVILLE

Given that Florida State is dealing with uncertainty at linebacker (Reggie Northrup's torn ACL in the Rose Bowl), we're going to give Louisville the nod as the ACC's best at the position. James Burgess and Keith Kelsey are the veteran core of a defense that will hang its hat on being physical up front. Coach Bobby Petrino says the defense, revamped though it is, can be dominant.

10. UTAH STATE

A deserved nod to a team from outside the Power 5 conferences, as the Aggies bring back Nick Vigil, who was All-Mountain West as a sophomore last season, and Kyler Fackrell, a legit NFL prospect who suffered an ACL injury in the 2014 season-opener.

ADOLPHUS WASHINGTON

Photo by AP Photo/Ric Tapia

TOP 10 DEFENSIVE BACKS

1. FLORIDA

The Gators can play D. That hasn't been the hang-up. All-American junior cornerback Vernon Hargreaves III heads up a five-man unit for Florida, which had more interceptions last season (16) than touchdowns allowed (15). Not challenging Hargreaves is wise, but that's a pick-your-poison kind of a deal for the opposition as the Gators roll out a deep unit of Brian Poole, Keanu Neal, Jalen Tabor, Quincy Wilson, Marcus Maye ... you get the idea.

2. FLORIDA STATE

We acknowledge that the talent drain from Florida State hit here, too — Ronald Darby and P.J. Williams are gone — but the big deal is that Jalen Ramsey is not. Moving from the "star" position to boundary corner, his size is going to be a full-on nightmare for receivers. Starters Nate Andrews and Tyler Hunter return at the safety positions. Be on the lookout for early-enrolled five-star frosh Derwin James.

3. OHIO STATE

Another area where the Buckeyes are as healthy as they'll ever be, with three starters back from the 2014 title team. Junior Vonn Bell is a dominant safety, and Eli Apple becomes the man at cornerback as a sophomore.

4. MICHIGAN

Is this the season Jabrill Peppers lives up to the massive billing? With him lurking, and terrific corners Blake Countess and Jourdan Lewis holding things down in their areas, the Wolverines could vault to the top of this list by season's end.

5. NOTRE DAME

The Irish defense is strong up the middle and dynamite on the outside in the back end with cornerbacks Kei-Varae Russell and Cole Luke. They'll make their team's pass rush look good.

6. DUKE

Because when you think of Duke, you think, "Athletic defensive backs!" Hey, the Blue Devils actually have them, starting with senior safety Jeremy Cash (he did start his career at Ohio State, in case you didn't know) and DeVon Edwards, a top playmaker. Cash has made 115 tackles in each of the past two seasons, and his decision to let the NFL wait was huge for the Blue Devils. All five starters in the secondary return.

7. USC

Adoree' Jackson has a chance to be the "it" player in college football. Senior Kevon Seymour, the starting cornerback on the other side, has the attention of NFL scouts. The safety positions will work themselves out just fine, trust us.

8. UCLA

A set of cornerbacks doesn't come more athletic than Ishmael Adams and Fabian Moreau, although we'd like to see more consistency. Another corner, Marcus Rios, allows for different combinations. Safety Randall Goforth, returning from shoulder surgeries — yes, one on each — is another big plus after he missed most of last season.

9. LSU

The Tigers have a national claim on being DBU (yes, we see you Alabama and Virginia Tech; calm down, Texas) and it's more of the same this season with safeties Jamal Adams and Jalen Mills, and cornerback Tre'Davious White.

10. OKLAHOMA STATE

The Cowboys have their top three cornerbacks returning and will be even deeper if, as expected, Michael Hunter, a two-year starter at Indiana, joins the team as a graduate transfer. Safety Jordan Sterns had 103 tackles last season.

SCOPING THE NATION

The playoff did its job ... so what's next?

BY ANTHONY GIMINO AND STEVE GREENBERG

Illustrations by Tim Williams

That was easy.

The first year of the four-team College Football Playoff was a roaring success, enhancing the regular season, retaining all of the outrage for talk radio, providing record-setting cable viewership for the elimination games and delivering a champion that everyone (well, almost everyone) could finally, correctly, describe as "undisputed."

Yeah, the playoff did what it was supposed to do.

And it made a mountain of cash, of course.

Amid the money and the TV eyeballs and the drama on the field, the NCAA even made a sensible ruling. We know, right? About a week before the championship game, the NCAA said it was OK for the CFP to help pay travel costs for players' families (up to $1,250 each for 1-2 people). Imagine that: A start down the road of common sense.

So, what does the second half of the decade have in store?

Let's begin with our top 10 storylines ...

1. #RollBuckeyes? Ohio State's road to Repeatville is bare and dry — no need to negotiate a confusing GPS-infused route to Glendale, Ariz.: Win the Big Ten (which surely will carry a ticket to the playoffs), win a semifinal, and win the championship game. Starting the season atop the polls makes this very doable, and not just in the champs-until-somebody-knocks-'em-off sense. These Buckeyes could be Urban Meyer's best team ever. An opening game at Virginia Tech, the only team to beat OSU in 2014, looms larger-than-large.

2. QB battles gone wild. They're everywhere — cases in point, the four programs that reached the first playoff. Who will lead Ohio State? Will it be Cardale Jones or J.T. Barrett — or Braxton Miller? And who will replace Oregon's great Marcus Mariota — veteran backup Jeff Lockie or Eastern Washington transfer Vernon Adams? Without Jameis Winston at Florida State, Sean Maguire is trying to hold off a gaggle of young arms. And in Tuscaloosa, Jake Coker's grip on the Alabama starting job is tenuous at best.

3. The new Big 12 order. Do we even have to pretend Oklahoma and Texas are the leading programs in this conference anymore? TCU and Baylor — still ticked off beyond belief at being left out of the 2014 playoff — look like the teams to beat *again*. The Horned Frogs have

to come out firing in the opener at Minnesota, but they should be OK there. And they get Baylor in Fort Worth in the regular-season finale, which (sorry, Texas State Fair) could be the league's monster game of the season.

4. The Big Two? You might've heard about the hiring at Michigan of some guy named Jim Harbaugh. Just how fast will Jimmy Ballgame restore glory to the Maize and Blue, and will the Wolverines' epic rivalry with Ohio State completely overshadow the rest of the Big Ten? East Division rivals Michigan State and Penn State will have their say, as will West powers-that-be Wisconsin and Nebraska, but the Buckeyes are head-and-shoulders above those programs — and Harbaugh's chase of Meyer is brilliant theater.

5. SEC FAQs. Actually, it boils down to one question: Is there a national-title contender in the house? Alabama is everybody's knee-jerk answer, but the Crimson Tide faces as much uncertainty as they have in any recent season. Auburn and LSU have high hopes, but it's hard to envision any West Division team running the table in the perceived best division in the perceived best conference in the land. Georgia stands out in the East, but the Bulldogs have a brutal road schedule. Chant "S-E-C! S-E-C!" at your own risk.

6. The Heisman pre-leaders. If you have to ask who Trevone Boykin is, you're hopelessly behind the curve. The TCU quarterback isn't awash in publicity, but his play was spectacular in 2014 and there'll be no ignoring a second performance of that caliber. Ohio State running back Ezekiel Elliott joins Boykin as a front-runner, but we otherwise love a wide-open field like this one.

7. Year of the Running Back. This 2015 group is ridiculously loaded. There's Elliott, the breakout star of last year's postseason, along with LSU monster Leonard Fournette, Oklahoma record-setter Samaje Perine and Wisconsin successor-to-the-throne Corey Clement. Ah, but we're just getting started: Georgia's Nick Chubb, Oregon's Royce Freeman, UCLA's Paul Perkins, Arizona's Nick Wilson, Pittsburgh's James Conner, Alabama's Derrick Henry ... we could go on, but you get the idea.

8. Top turf wars. The best two divisions in college football — SEC West and Pac-12 South — are so much better than everybody else, it isn't even funny. With Arkansas coming along and Texas A&M widely expected to bounce back, the SEC West is deeper than ever. And once again, you might as well pull a name out of a hat when trying to pick the Pac-12 South winner ... as long as it doesn't come up "Colorado," anyway.

9. The Muschamp Effect. Auburn is paying Will Muschamp a head coach's ransom to be its defensive coordinator, a move that'll look terrible if Muschamp fails as he did as head coach at Florida. But why would he fail? Running a defense — just him, his players and all those beautiful X's and O's — is the man's sweet spot. If Muschamp makes the sort of impact at Auburn that many expect he will, watch the market value of the top coordinators continue to skyrocket.

10. Do the Irish have their mojo back? Last season was strange and, at times, awful for Notre Dame, but 2015 could be special. Good luck finding a team anywhere with more returning starters than Brian Kelly and his staff have to work with. Offensively, this should be Kelly's best Irish team by a long stretch whether Everett Golson or Malik Zaire ends up with the quarterback job. An opening test at home against Texas will be a huge tone-setter.

PROJECTING THE BIG BOWLS

Remember, there are contracts in place for some of the Big Six bowls that fall outside of the four-team playoff. The Rose retains its Big Ten/Pac-12 partners; the Sugar will have teams from the SEC and Big 12. If champs from those conferences qualify for the playoff, then the bowl chooses a replacement from that league.

The four-team playoff is almost certain to exclude teams from outside the Big Five conferences, but at least it guarantees a major bowl for one team from outside the power structure. Last year, that meant Mountain West champion Boise State landed in the Fiesta (rather than in the Las Vegas Bowl in the old BCS system), where the Broncos fabulously pulled the Statue of Liberty play from the archives to help defeat Arizona.

Here is how *Lindy's* sees it all shaking out this year:

*(**Note:** At-large means any team in the country — so probably a Big Five conference team, while Group means teams from the small conferences: Group of Five):*

PEACH BOWL
Thursday, Dec. 31
Atlanta, Ga. • Georgia Dome
At-large/Group vs. At-large/Group
Lindy's pick: Georgia vs. Clemson

CFP SEMIFINAL: COTTON BOWL
Thursday, Dec. 31
Arlington, Texas • AT&T Stadium
National semifinal
Lindy's pick: TCU vs. Alabama

CFP SEMIFINAL: ORANGE BOWL
Thursday, Dec. 31
Miami • Sun Life Stadium
National semifinal
Lindy's pick: Ohio State vs. Oregon

FIESTA BOWL
Friday, Jan. 1
Glendale, Ariz. • Univ. of Phoenix Stadium
At-large/Group vs. At-large/Group
Lindy's pick: Notre Dame vs. Boise State

ROSE BOWL
Friday, Jan. 1
Pasadena, Calif. • Rose Bowl
Big Ten vs. Pac-12
Lindy's pick: USC vs. Michigan State

SUGAR BOWL
Friday, Jan. 1
New Orleans • Superdome
Big 12 vs. SEC
Lindy's pick: Auburn vs. Baylor

CHAMPIONSHIP GAME
Monday, Jan. 11
Glendale, Arizona • Univ. of Phoenix Stadium
Lindy's pick: Ohio State vs. TCU

COLLEGE FOOTBALL
PLAYOFF

SCOPING THE NATION

NEW YEAR'S EVE IT IS

Last year's semifinals worked out like clockwork on New Year's Day: Oregon and Ohio State winning the Rose and Sugar bowls to advance to the national championship game 10 days later.

If only it could always be that simple. But it's college football. Nothing is ever that simple. This season, the semifinals will be on New Year's Eve in the Orange and Cotton Bowls, preceding New Year's Day for games that are ... well, not semifinals.

Since there are six big games in the playoff rotation, the College Football Playoff deciders settled on a pair of tripleheaders on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

An important consideration is that in years that the Rose and Sugar are not semifinals, they still hold the New Year's Day time slots. After all, the Rose has to pair up with its parade, and why would anyone want to mess up a New Orleans New Year's Eve with a football game? So, the games are New Year's Day in Pasadena and New Year's Night in New Orleans. Follow us so far?

OK, so the Orange and Cotton are semifinals this season, and ESPN saw the problem of this sequence of events: The TV network pushed in the offseason to get the semifinals moved from Thursday night, Dec. 31, to the much-more-desirable Saturday, Jan. 2 slot ... but nooooooooo. That would make way too much sense.

This means it's likely that the Rose and Sugar will be playing on New Year's Day with four second-place teams, while the Big Ten, Pac-12, SEC and Big 12 champs are occupied the night before. So much for building continuity and momentum in a bowl season.

The CFP says it set up a 12-year plan for tripleheaders on Dec. 31 and Jan. 1, and (no matter how flawed that plan is) it didn't want to break that attempt to establish tradition in only the second year.

TIME FOR A NICE, DEEP BREATH

Folks, we have earned a deep breath, with the breakneck rate of changes that college football has embraced in the past few years. Consider that the WAC still existed when the decade began. So did the Big East.

Nine teams have been added to the Football Bowl Subdivision since then, including 2015 newbie Charlotte. The Pac-12, Big Ten and SEC now have their own networks. Even Nick Saban is running a hurry-up offense ... well, at least some of the time.

OK, exhale.

For a moment, not much has changed from 2014. The top teams still figure to be the top teams. There was one spectacular hire (welcome back, Jim!), but only 15 total coaching changes. Charlotte is the only new team, replacing disbanded UAB, keeping FBS membership at 128. Navy, no longer independent, has joined the American Athletic Conference — accounting for the sum of the conference alignment news.

Now, another deep breath and hold it, because more change is coming. Expanded playoffs? An NCAA breakaway for the Big 5 conferences? The first $10 million coach? Pay to play? Player unions?

Spring Champs

Y'all know it doesn't count. It's not real football. Two words: Glorified practice. You don't even get to mock another team, make up funny words to their fight songs, insult their cheerleaders.

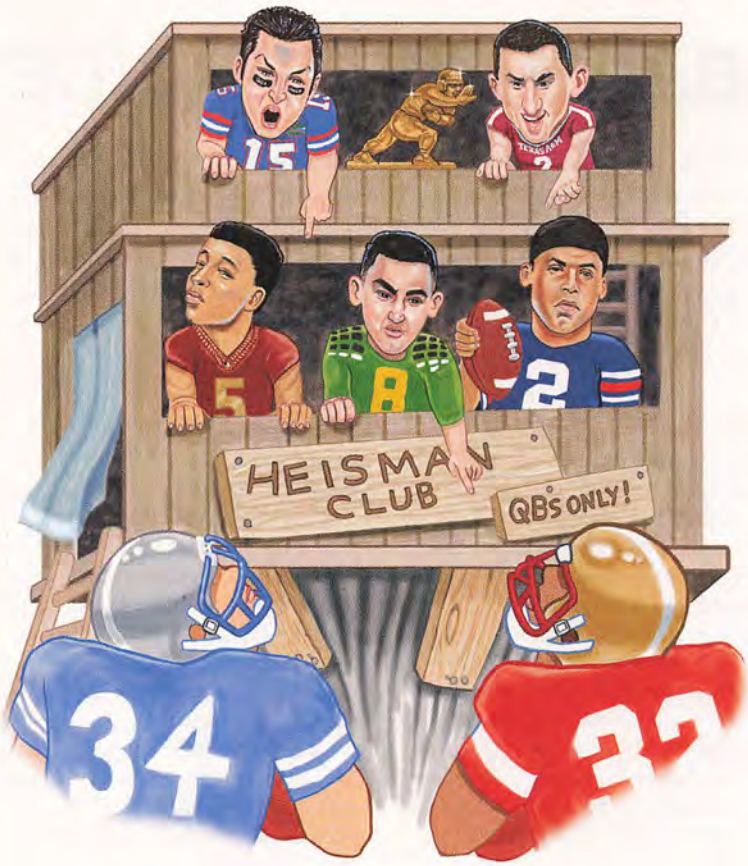
In some ways, spring games are less important than ever — year-round conditioning (you know, the *voluntary* kind, wink, wink) allows teams to hit the ground running and do real work during the 14 practices before the final scrimmage. Yet, these are increasingly made-for-TV events because air time on those conference networks isn't going to program itself.

Whatever your motivation for going to spring games, well, bless you for it. We raise our Passion Bucket to you. And especially you, Columbus. Ohio State set a national record by drawing 99,391 to Ohio Stadium in April. Impressive.

In fact, the top nine spring game attendances came from two conferences — the Big Ten and SEC. Here are the figures/estimates from those nine games:

1. Ohio State: 99,391
2. Nebraska: 76,881
3. Penn State: 68,000
4. Alabama: 65,175
5. Tennessee: 63,016
6. Auburn: 62,143
7. Michigan: 60,000
8. Michigan State: 48,000
9. Georgia: 46,815

Ohio State Spring Game 2015 | Photo by Khris Hale Icon Sportswire via AP Images



Heisman Watch

The ol' stiff-armed statue should be remade in the image of a player in mid-throw. A quarterback has won eight of the past nine Heismans, and 13 of 15 since 2000 (and that's even including the vacated 2005 award of running back Reggie Bush).

Do we think that trend will continue? Uh, yeah, but this *is* the Year of the Running Back (haven't you heard?), so a lot more of those rock-toting guys are going to show up on this list:

1. Trevone Boykin, QB, TCU — The senior enters the second year of a perfect marriage of offense and dual-threat athlete.

2. Ezekiel Elliott, RB, Ohio State — Two things. One, he's not an Ohio State quarterback, so we don't have to worry about whether he'll play. Two, we simply can't forget how he rushed for 696 yards in the final three games of the season, against Wisconsin, Alabama and Oregon. Wow.

3. An Ohio State quarterback — We're taking the cop-out. Take your pick — Cardale Jones, Braxton Miller or J.T. Barrett — and by the time you read this, there might be more clarity about the most fascinating quarterback race ever.

4. Derrick Henry, RB, Alabama — He gets the nod over other SEC players because he's playing for our projected SEC champ, and voters have proven they will default to an Alabama running back (see, Mark Ingram, 2009). Plus, the dude is an absolute beast.

5. Nick Chubb, RB, Georgia — He finished his freshman season with eight consecutive 100-yard performances, and the coaches will relentlessly feed him behind one of the best offensive lines in the country.

6. Cody Kessler, QB, USC — Uncannily accurate, with 39 touchdown passes, five interceptions and a 69.7 percent completion percentage last season. Now what he needs is for Steve Sarkisian to really turn him loose downfield.

7. Deshaun Watson, QB, Clemson — We're taking the view that he'll be rarin' to fly for the opener as he comes back from an ACL injury, but does it really matter? He was good enough to torment and beat South Carolina last season when his ligament was already torn.

8. Jeremy Johnson, QB, Auburn — Everyone expects the Tigers' new starter to be awesome, and it's not as if a first-year starting quarterback can't win this award. Cam Newton, Johnny Manziel, Jameis Winston ...

9. Dak Prescott, QB, Mississippi State — Love Dak. He finished eighth in the 2014 Heisman voting. But the Heisman is part function of team, and if the Bulldogs take a step back from a magical year, Prescott will be hard pressed to do more than tread water in the balloting.

10. Royce Freeman, RB, Oregon — Oregon coaches said he was one of their most improved players in the spring, and that was after he rushed for 1,365 yards as a true freshman.

HEISMAN SLEEPERS ★

1. Malik Zaire, QB, Notre Dame — If the Irish quarterback situation plays out in his direction, Zaire showed in late-season games against USC and LSU that he's capable of leading an offense that should finally play up to Brian Kelly's previous standards.

2. Seth Russell, QB, Baylor — Whoever directs the Bears' attack becomes an automatic Heisman candidate.

3. Dalvin Cook, RB, Florida State — The dynamic sophomore plays for the right team and is ready to be the centerpiece of the FSU offense. Just hold on to the ball, young fella.

4. Vernon Adams, QB, Oregon — The graduate transfer from Eastern Washington amassed 10,438 passing yards and accounted for 121 touchdowns at the FCS school. Although he won't start competing for the starting job until August, if anybody in the country has the look of plug-and-play, this is the guy.

5. Somebody on the other side of the ball — We picked Ohio State defensive end Joey Bosa as our national Defensive Player of the Year, but he doesn't figure to be among the top two Heisman candidates on his own team. So, let's rule him out of this discussion. A pair of linebackers — Arizona's Scooby Wright (ninth in the Heisman last season) and Notre Dame's Jaylen Smith — have the combination of skill, stats, team and Q rating to at least deserve an invite to the party.

SCOPING THE NATION

COACHING CHANGES

The changes are relatively few, in part because only the firing of Bo Pelini at Nebraska set off a chain reaction of coaching changes — the Huskers' hiring of Oregon State's Mike Riley begat the Wisconsin opening, which begat a spot at Pittsburgh.

One trend hasn't changed: If you want to be a college head coach, go to school to study offense. Of the seven assistants moving to the big-boy headsets, only one — Pat Narduzzi — comes from the defensive side of the ball.

BUFFALO

Out: Jeff Quinn
(Alex Wood was interim coach last four games)
In: Lance Leipold

Let's start with a prediction: Leipold won't win six national titles at Buffalo, as he did — incredibly, in only eight seasons — at Division III Wisconsin-Whitewater. But the man's history of gigantic success is not to be taken lightly. Leipold will have to learn to take his lumps, but there's ground to be gained — immediately — in the MAC, and that ground will be gained with balance on offense, accountability on defense and no excuses.

CENTRAL MICHIGAN

Out: Dan Enos
In: John Bonamego

What fan base doesn't like to see an alum take the reins? Problems, though: Bonamego, 51, is a first-time head coach — at any level — and he spent the past 16 seasons coaching special teams in the NFL. Prior to that, the top college program he worked at was Army, which invites all sorts of questions about his recruiting chops. Misfit, anyone? Could be.

COLORADO STATE

Out: Jim McElwain
(Dave Baldwin coached bowl game)
In: Mike Bobo

Last time CSU needed a new coach, it landed a first-timer who'd built a platform as an offensive coordinator for an SEC power. Rinse, repeat. Bobo is Georgia to the core, though, and seems much farther afield in Fort Collins than did McElwain, who had spent most of his life out West. So this is Bobo's chance to prove himself, and he inherits a hard-working, high-achieving Rams group that should make the transition bearable for all involved. Mind you, Bobo won't have quarterback Garrett Grayson to run things.

FLORIDA

Out: Will Muschamp
(D.J. Durkin coached bowl game)
In: Jim McElwain

Do Gators fans even know what a decent offense looks like anymore? If nothing else, McElwain will revive that side of the ball; his resume as an offensive coach borders on brilliant. But questions? There are a few: Will the program lose its defensive identity? Can McElwain really swim with the recruiting sharks in the SEC? Is a nice-guy approach what's needed after the tumult of Muschamp's reign? Nothing less than a return to national-title contention will be good enough.

HOUSTON

Out: Tony Levine
(David Gibbs coached bowl game)
In: Tom Herman

The Cougars came around defensively under Levine, but the offense tailed off from where it had been during Kevin Sumlin's tenure. Herman's job is merely to restore every bit of the luster to UH football, and that means scoring big and, of course, producing high-octane quarterbacks. Herman has a QB battle on his hands in Year 1, which is familiar territory for a guy who coached up J.T. Barrett and Cardale Jones at Ohio State. Herman doesn't have that sort of talent to work with, but his methods are proven.

KANSAS

Out: Charlie Weis (Clint Bowen was interim coach last eight games)
In: David Beaty

There's nowhere to go but up for Beaty in his first head coaching job, and his positive vibes can only help after a miserable Jayhawks run under the dour Weis. Will Beaty break through in recruiting? He'd better, because that's why KU hired him. Retaining 2014 interim coach Clint Bowen as defensive coordinator was a wise move. Still, it's hard to envision the Jayhawks climbing from the depths of the Big 12 anytime soon.

MICHIGAN

Out: Brady Hoke
In: Jim Harbaugh

There's no reason to pretend this wasn't the grand-slam hire of all hires, right? Harbaugh reinvented the wheel at Stanford and then kicked it up a notch with the 49ers. No one else would have given Michigan fans reason to believe that toppling Urban Meyer and Ohio State is possible. The Buckeyes are far ahead of their rivals entering 2015, but watch the gap close quickly and dramatically. The Wolverines went tragically soft under Rich Rodriguez and then Hoke. Harbaugh will gnaw off his own khakis before he lets that continue.

Jim Harbaugh | Photo by Rick Osentoski-USA TODAY Sports

NEBRASKA

Out: Bo Pelini
(Barney Cotton coached bowl game)
In: Mike Riley

You might've noticed that Pelini wasn't exactly warm and fuzzy. Riley is perhaps the most likeable person in this dog-eat-dog sport: *Everybody* loves the guy. So there's that; Big Red Nation will *like* its new coach a whole lot. But will Riley continue — let alone improve upon — the program's maddening run of seven consecutive four-loss seasons? On the one hand, this hire was inspired by a desire for happiness, but don't kid yourself: The program is desperate to move up in the Big Ten. It seems to point to a new reality for Huskers' fans: Are they ready to deal with more also-ran seasons if their coach conducts himself well? Or will Riley show that nice guys can finish first?

OREGON STATE

Out: Mike Riley
In: Gary Andersen

Riley's fan base — which includes the media covering the program — will have to get used to a guy who doesn't ooze friendliness, longing only to instill toughness in his team. Andersen's choice to leave Wisconsin for Corvallis remains befuddling from purely a football standpoint, but we get it; that part of the country is more Andersen's speed, and he'll have unadulterated power at OSU that he never was going to have in Madison. Lots of luck chasing the fellas from Eugene though.

PITTSBURGH

Out: Paul Chryst
(Joe Rudolph coached bowl game)
In: Pat Narduzzi

Imagine that, a new football coach at Pittsburgh. At least Chryst gave the Panthers three seasons of stability, although those seasons reeked of .500 results. Meanwhile, Narduzzi, having dialed up Michigan State's defense as its coordinator, became one of the hottest assistants in the land. If Pitt was going to go the assistant route all along, Narduzzi would have to have been seen as a home run. But remember, this is his first time running a program.

SMU

Out: June Jones
(Tom Mason was interim coach last 10 games)
In: Chad Morris

No-brainer alert: The Mustangs perked up with their hire. Morris is an offensive whiz whose wide-open style meshes beautifully with much of Texas' high school scene. More to the point, SMU — coming off a hideous 1-11 campaign — needed a heavy dose of hope, and Morris provides that and then some. There will be a sizable leap in the AAC standings in Year 1.

TROY

Out: Larry Blakeney
In: Neal Brown

All Brown, a first-time head coach, has to do at Troy is create a new identity after the Trojans' 24-year run under Larry Blakeney. And that'll be, well, hugely difficult. But Brown, only 35, is a real go-getter, having done solid work as offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach at Texas Tech and Kentucky. Before that, he coached at Troy, so he shouldn't be out of his depth. This looks like an ideal fit.

TULSA

Out: Bill Blankenship
In: Philip Montgomery

If you like Art Briles — and who doesn't? — then you have to like this hire by Tulsa. Unlike Blankenship, who was a hugely successful high school coach in the city, Montgomery brings all the glitter of having called plays at Baylor during the Bears' transformation from laughingstocks to college football titans. Tulsa's horrendous performance the past two seasons might soon be forgotten.

UNLV

Out: Bobby Hauck
In: Tony Sanchez

Consider this a Vegas-style roll of the dice: Sanchez is a high school coach gone wild with an opportunity to hit it big — unless he flames out as so many previous UNLV leaders have. There are only so many Bishop Gorman players Sanchez can land, but that feels like a slight against the man and there's no reason yet to assume he's not prepared for what awaits him. For now, the rest of the Mountain West remains unworried.

WISCONSIN

Out: Gary Andersen
(Barry Alvarez coached bowl game)
In: Paul Chryst

Chryst was offensive coordinator for some of the best Badgers' units on record, but one must ask — is he best-suited as an OC? The Pittsburgh years were uninspiring. Chryst doesn't have the resume of Andersen, let alone that of Bret Bielema or Barry Alvarez. But he's a Madison man, a native and an alum, and after surprisingly losing back-to-back coaches to other college programs, that's worth something.

COACHES ON THE HOT SEAT

You have seen the hirings, what about the impeding firings? Start looking here:

1. Mike London, Virginia — He's 23-38 in five seasons, has had one winning record, has yet to beat Virginia Tech, and has seemed to misplace his offensive playbook. He's recruited well, but other than that ...

2. Norm Chow, Hawaii — Getting a deserved chance at a head coaching job hasn't been all Chow — or the Warriors — hoped it would be as a likely last chapter to a great career. He's 8-29 in three seasons.

3. Paul Rhoads, Iowa State — Rhoads wants to be in Ames — which is much more than can be said of many of his predecessors — and a contract through 2021 provides a measure of protection. The 2-16 record in the Big 12 and season-opening losses to FCS schools in each of the past two seasons ... well, those tell a different story.

4. Tim Beckman, Illinois — He's gone from two to four to six wins in his three seasons with the Illini, so what's the problem? Thing is, you can only count maybe two of those victories as "decent," and the 4-20 conference mark is hard to miss. Any kudos for eking into a bowl game last season was erased by a subsequent loss to Louisiana Tech.

5. Willie Taggart, USF — He had to clean out his coordinators after last season, his second at the school, and that's never a good sign to have to do that so soon. He needs his recruiting advantages to kick in ... right ... about ... now.

6. Kirk Ferentz, Iowa — Hate to put him on the list, but the Hawkeyes missed a golden opportunity last season when they went 7-5 against a once-in-a-generation soft schedule, followed by a blowout bowl loss to Tennessee. Yes, we know his buyout is north of a cool $13 million, but he keeps drifting closer to a breaking point after several seasons of not being particularly relevant.

Others: Larry Fedora, North Carolina; Kevin Wilson, Indiana; Al Golden, Miami; Darrell Hazel, Purdue

SCOPING THE NATION

WHO DOES IT BEST (OR WORST)

Based on 2014 numbers ...

Game pace:

Fastest tempo:
Baylor, 87.5 plays per game

Slowest tempo:
New Mexico, 61.25 plays per game

Based just on number of plays, Baylor's players experienced nearly *four more games* of college football than the Lobos. Do we call that "value" or "a safety issue?"

Longest average game:
Baylor, 3:40

Shortest average game:
Old Dominion, 3:07

Big plays:

Most plays of 20-plus yards:
Marshall, 111

Most plays of 50-plus yards:
Colorado State, 19

Most yards per play:
Marshall, 7.59

Fewest yards per play:
Wake Forest, 3.38

Big paychecks:

Most money per coach:
SEC West; all seven coaches make more than $4 million per year. And yet someone will finish last.

Best coaching staff value (via *USA Today* figures):
Northern Illinois, $116,820 per win (11)

Worst coaching staff value:
Colorado, $2,302,000 per win (2)

Pick 'em:

Best record vs. the spread:
TCU, 11-2

Worst record vs. the spread:
UConn, 2-10

Top 12 Non-Conference Games

1. Oregon at Michigan State, Sept. 12 — Spartans might need to plant some turf monsters in their grass to slow down the Ducks, because none of their defenders did in the second half of last year's game in Eugene.

2. Alabama vs. Wisconsin (Arlington), Sept. 5 — Offseason prayers said by Tide fans: Please don't let us lose back-to-back games to the Big Ten, please don't let us lose back-to-back games to the Big Ten ...

3. Arizona State vs. Texas A&M (Houston), Sept. 5 — College football needs more — much, much more — of Pac-12 vs. SEC action, and this is what we're talking about. ASU's feisty new QB, Mike Bercovici, takes on one who got away from the Devils — A&M's Kyle Allen (Scottsdale).

4. Notre Dame at Clemson, Oct. 3 — Given the location, this ranks as the Irish's toughest test in a season of tough tests. Either team can make a legit playoff run.

5. Michigan at Utah, Sept. 3 — Let's just get this Harbaugh party started.

6. Ohio State at Virginia Tech, Sept. 7 — OSU's title defense begins against the one team that tripped up the Buckeyes last season when J.T. Barrett was still getting his feet wet. Seems like *sooooo* long ago.

7. USC at Notre Dame, Oct. 17 — Steve Sarkisian won his coaching debut in the rivalry last season, and Cody Kessler became the first quarterback to throw five scoring passes in a half against the Irish. ND's D was far from healthy that afternoon, though, and the stakes should be much greater this time around.

8. Oklahoma at Tennessee, Sept. 12 — Young Vols weren't ready last year when they traveled to Norman in September, losing 34-10. Could be a much different story this season.

9. Texas at Notre Dame, Sept. 5 — It's the Longhorns' first trip to South Bend since 1995, and it's going to be in prime time. Let's do this more often, guys.

10. Auburn vs. Louisville (Atlanta), Sept. 5 — Two teams kick the tires on promising quarterbacks, Auburn with Jeremy Johnson and Louisville with, presumably, Reggie Bonnafon.

11. Georgia Tech at Notre Dame, Sept. 19 — Georgia Tech is coming off an 11-win season, and its option attack, fueled by quarterback Justin Thomas, will be a firm test for the Irish defense.

12. Nebraska at Miami, Sept. 19 — It's not your father's Miami-Nebraska game, but we can pretend, can't we?

Oregon vs. Michigan State | Photo by Scott Olmos-USA TODAY Sports

Alabama vs. Auburn | Marvin Gentry-USA TODAY Sports

Top 12 Conference Games

1. Alabama at Auburn, Nov. 28 — You want a College Football Playoff that has quarterfinals? How about one with a round of 16? That's basically what we're looking at here, as it's perfectly likely both teams will be staring at a scenario in which it has to win the Iron Bowl, the SEC title game, a national semifinal and then the championship.

2. Baylor at TCU, Nov. 27 — Let's go back five years. Baylor was coming off 14 consecutive losing seasons since joining the Big 12. TCU was in the Mountain West Conference. What would have been the odds that this matchup would become THE rivalry in the Big 12? This series took a colossal leap forward last season in a 61-58 win for the Bears, a result that ultimately stiff-armed the Horned Frogs right out of the College Football Playoff while not doing enough for Baylor's cred. This rematch should have it all: The highest of stakes, revenge, bitterness ... all played out at neck-cracking speed.

3. Ohio State at Michigan, Nov. 28 — Come for the rivalry, definitely stay for the postgame handshake.

4. Alabama at Georgia, Oct. 3 — First trip Between the Hedges for the Tide since 2008, which was three national titles ago for Nick Saban. Loser here has ample time to regroup for a run at the SEC title game, which is exactly what we expect to happen.

5. USC at Oregon, Nov. 21 — Back on the cross-division schedule after a two-year hiatus, this could be the first of two meetings in a span of three weeks.

6. Florida State at Clemson, Nov. 7 — Tigers QB Deshaun Watson gets a second crack at the 'Noles, who stole one in OT last season in Tallahassee. Winner takes the ACC Atlantic.

7. Michigan State at Ohio State, Nov. 21 — Last we checked, these are still the two best teams in the Big Ten.

8. LSU at Alabama, Nov. 7 — This matchup rarely disappoints. And we'd be happy if this was just half the classic of last year's game. Alabama, after coughing up a late fumble inside the 10, ended up driving for a tying field goal, then went into Lane Kiffin's bag of tricks to complete a 24-yard overtime pass to 304-pound Brandon Greene.

9. Michigan State at Michigan, Oct. 17 — Sparty has won six of the past seven meetings, and this is really the last chance for Big Blue fans to blame the coaching, as in, "We would have won this game if that *bleeping* Hoke had recruited better."

10. TCU at Oklahoma, Nov. 21 — Given the opponent and time of the season, this one has more implications for OU than the Red River Showdown vs. Texas. TCU won 37-33 last season with the help of a late fourth-down stop.

11. Wisconsin at Nebraska, Oct. 10 — Because someone has to win the Big Ten West, and two new coaches really want to do it.

12. Georgia at Auburn, Nov. 14 — Let's see what the Tigers have left in the tank, as this is the end of a four-game stretch that begins at Arkansas, vs. Ole Miss and at Texas A&M.

BONUS: Arizona at Arizona State (Nov. 21), UCLA at USC (Nov. 28): The Pac-12 South isn't quite the SEC West, but it's close, and this late sequence of rivalry games likely will tell the tale.

EXCLUSIVELY for Lindy's preview customers
FREE e-newsletter
Your purchase of this Lindy's Sports Preview includes exclusive digital access to
Lindy's weekly BUZZ
From Lindy's to your inbox EVERY FRIDAY beginning in August
Lindy's Weekly BUZZ is the official premium newsletter from Lindy's Sports. Delivered exclusively to Lindy's preview customers. Each week's edition gives fans the information they need to stay on top of the game.
You'll Receive:
- Game Previews
- "Best of" Weekly Headlines
- Lindy's Picks-to-Click
- Fantasy Tips
- Upset of the Week

Simply go to www.lindyssports.com/newsletter to sign up.
FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
Lindy'sSPORTS.COM
"like" us on facebook
follow us on twitter

Comeback Kids

Here are 15 players ready for launch in 2015 after suffering major injuries in 2014:

Bralon Addison, WR, Oregon — The Ducks made it all the way to the national championship game after being without one of their top playmakers all season. The speedy Addison suffered a torn ACL in the spring of 2014, on the heels of a sophomore season in which he caught 61 passes for 890 yards and seven touchdowns. This spring, he shed plenty of rust.

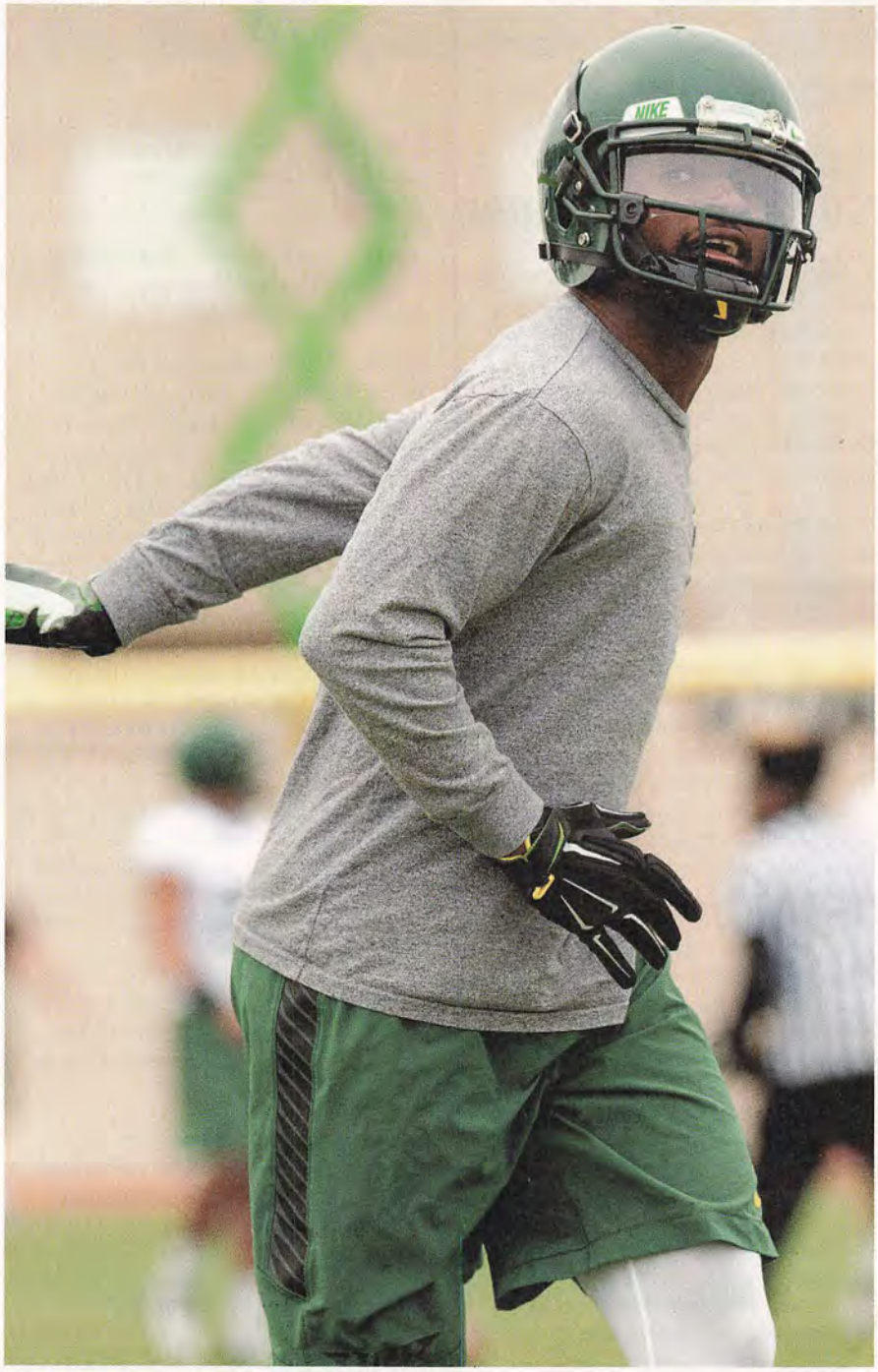
Kenny Bigelow, DT, USC — He was a top-10 recruit in 2013, then redshirted, then tore an ACL last summer during a voluntary workout. Bigelow, expected to be in the rotation in USC's three-man front, was limited to individual work this spring but looked fit at a trimmer 285 pounds. Not everyone can follow his diet, though. He said he lost three pounds just by cutting off his dreadlocks.

Kenyan Drake, RB, Alabama — If you search "Kenyan Drake injury," you'll be directed to a YouTube video that comes with this caution: "WARNING: graphic footage." Yeah. It's not pretty. That gruesome broken leg, suffered Oct. 4 against Ole Miss, cost him the rest of the season, but he was well on his way back to 100 percent in the spring. He's a much-needed second-stringer to Derrick Henry and/or a wideout for Lane Kiffin to use as he sees fit.

Carl Lawson, DE, Auburn — A Freshman All-American in 2013, he suffered a torn ACL last spring and sat out the 2014 season. He was back in a big way this spring for new coordinator Will Muschamp, playing the Buck position, a play-making hybrid defensive end/outside linebacker spot. Basically, the former No. 1-rated high school defensive end will be this year's college football version of Dante Fowler Jr., who manned the Buck for Muschamp last season at Florida. The Tigers' pass rush needs Lawson in a huge way, too; they had a mere 21 sacks last year.

Luther Maddy, DT, Virginia Tech — He played in just the first four games, with nine tackles (and, whoa, still earned honorable mention All-ACC honors from the coaches), but underwent two knee surgeries, the first for torn meniscus. He was third-team All-ACC in 2013, and his return helps give the Hokies perhaps the saltiest defense in the league.

Braxton Miller, QB, Ohio State — The Buckeyes showed last season that they don't *need* Braxton Miller. Of course, they *want* Braxton Miller. But it's going



Oregon Ducks wide receiver Bralon Addison | Photo by Jerome Miron-USA TODAY Sports

to be tricky, and he was still recovering from shoulder surgery during the spring, and rumors were swirling, and dang these print deadlines ... so, uh, check back at LindysSports.com as news breaks.

Jamal Palmer, DE, Baylor — He played in five games last season before an ACL tear wiped out the rest of his season. The senior, a former honorable mention All-Big 12 pick, is healthy and ready to rejoin a loaded Bears front.

Jabrill Peppers, S, Michigan — Heck of a departing gift left by Brady Hoke. Rated as the No. 3 prospect in the 2014 class by 247Sports, Peppers played in three games last season before injuries piled up and he was able to take a redshirt. Jim Harbaugh will turn him loose all over the field and into the backfield as a multi-purpose weapon, and the coach offered the highest praise at the end of the spring, saying, "He's been A-plus."

Michael Rose-Ivey, LB, Nebraska — He set a school freshman record with 66 tackles in 2013, including 49 in the final five games, but a knee injury in fall camp kept him on the sideline all of last season. He's working at an outside spot for coordinator Mark Banker, one of the best in the business.

Deshaun Watson, QB, Clemson — The college football world is his. We only got a peek at what he could do before an ACL tear shut him down ... but that peek was spectacular. He completed 67.9 percent of his passes (93 of 137) for 1,466 yards, with 14 touchdowns and two interceptions. He added five touchdowns on the ground.

Kelby Brown, LB; Braxton Deaver, TE, Duke — Each suffered ACL tears in August and were subsequently granted a sixth year of eligibility by the NCAA. That's found gold for David Cutcliffe, who gets back an All-ACC linebacker who had 114 tackles, including 11 for loss, in 2013, and a tight end who caught 46 passes for 600 yards that season. Cutcliffe said both should be 100 percent in camp.

Laquon Treadwell, WR; Denzel Nkemdiche, LB; Laremy Tunsil, OT, Ole Miss — Treadwell's goal-line leg fracture was gruesome; Nkemdiche played in just seven games because of a broken ankle; Tunsil suffered a fractured leg in the bowl game. When healthy, all three are among the best in the nation at their positions.

WINNING IN FEBRUARY

The industry standard for team recruiting rankings comes from the 247Sports' Composite, which equally balances the ratings from multiple major services, including, of course, its own.

Since Alabama has been No. 1 in those composite rankings in each of the past five years, we had a pretty good idea which team was going to come out on top once we crunched the numbers for a longer snapshot of signing days, 2011 through 2015. After that, though ... well, let's see what happened.

OK, you have your usual suspects, and note that the top three teams account for the past four national championships. Aha! Recruiting rankings have predictive value! *Who'd a thunk*?

But also note what you don't see. No TCU. No Wisconsin. No Michigan State. There are always exceptions. Wonderful, happy, exceptions.

When it comes to recruiting, we do love our sleeper stories — Arizona linebacker Scooby Wright and Colorado State's Rashard Higgins to name two. Higgins, in the kind of false precision inherent to these kind of rankings, was tabbed as the 176th best receiver in the 2013 class, 175 spots below Laquon Treadwell. Not much difference now, right?

As a prognostication tool, the recruiting rankings often break down on an individual basis — because sometimes guys simply end up as Peaked In High School Rob Lowe — although a group of four- and five-star guys is probably going to end up beating your group of two- and three-stars.

Check out the Top 25 teams for the past five years of recruiting, using the cumulative 247Sports' point value:

RK.	TEAM	POINTS
1.	Alabama	1,558.69
2.	Ohio State	1,438.75
3.	Florida State	1,420.09
4.	LSU	1,387.33
5.	USC	1,382.77
6.	Georgia	1,366.07
7.	Auburn	1,348.05
8.	Florida	1,334.08
9.	Notre Dame	1,327.39
10.	Texas	1,327.18
11.	Clemson	1,283.42
12.	Tennessee	1,267.41
13.	Texas A&M	1,255.40
14.	Oklahoma	1,245.62
15.	Oregon	1,210.39
16.	Michigan	1,204.27
17.	UCLA	1,198.67
18.	South Carolina	1,190.32
19.	Miami	1,185.16
20.	Ole Miss	1,176.85
21.	Stanford	1,139.29
22.	Washington	1,088.52
23.	Nebraska	1,079.10
24.	Virginia Tech	1,071.09
25.	Mississippi State	1,070.01

Nick Saban | Photo by Marvin Gentry-USA TODAY Sports

SCOPING THE NATION

SNEAK PEAK

By the time NFL commissioner Roger Goodell announced the first pick of the 2015 NFL Draft, our pals at NFLDraftScout.com had long been scouting, evaluating, breaking down the next wave of prospects. A year away from the 2016 draft, here is who they had as the top five seniors on their draft board at each major position group. Check out NFLDraftScout.com to see how it changes once the games begin.

Duke Williams | Photo by RD Moore

QUARTERBACK

1. Connor Cook	Michigan State
2. Dak Prescott	Mississippi State
3. Trevone Boykin	TCU
4. Kevin Hogan	Stanford
5. Cody Kessler	USC

RUNNING BACK

1. Devontae Booker	Utah
2. Byron Marshall	Oregon
3. Jonathan Williams	Arkansas
4. Tra Carson	Texas A&M
5. Keith Marshall	Georgia

WIDE RECEIVER

1. Duke Williams	Auburn
2. Josh Doctson	TCU
3. Nelson Spruce	Colorado
4. Quinshad Davis	North Carolina
5. Leonte Carroo	Rutgers

TIGHT END

1. Kyle Carter	Penn State
2. Dillon Gordon	LSU
3. Nick Vannett	Ohio State
4. Darion Griswold	Arkansas State
5. Jay Rome	Georgia

CENTER

1. Max Tuerk	USC
2. Isaac Seumalo	Oregon State
3. Mike Matthews	Texas A&M
4. Nick Martin	Notre Dame
5. Jake Brendel	UCLA

OFFENSIVE GUARD

1. Vadal Alexander	LSU
2. Landon Turner	North Carolina
3. Christian Westerman	Arizona State
4. Cody Whitehair	Kansas State
5. Jordan Rigsbee	California

OFFENSIVE TACKLE

1. Taylor Decker	Ohio State
2. Spencer Drango	Baylor
3. Tyler Johnstone	Oregon
4. Le'Raven Clark	Texas Tech
5. Tyler Marz	Wisconsin

DEFENSIVE END

1. Shawn Oakman	Baylor
2. Shilique Calhoun	Michigan State
3. DeForest Buckner	Oregon
4. Bronson Kaufusi	Brigham Young
5. Charles Tapper	Oklahoma

DEFENSIVE TACKLE

1. Sheldon Day	Notre Dame
2. Adolphus Washington	Ohio State
3. Anthony Zettel	Penn State
4. Antwaun Woods	USC
5. Josh Tupou	Colorado

OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

1. Jordan Jenkins	Georgia
2. Eric Striker	Oklahoma
3. Terrance Smith	Florida State
4. Joshua Perry	Ohio State
5. Dadi Nicolas	Virginia Tech

INSIDE LINEBACKER

1. Reggie Ragland	Alabama
2. Rodney Hardrick	Oregon
3. Cassanova McKinzy	Auburn
4. Kentrell Brothers	Missouri
5. Reggie Northrup	Florida State

CORNERBACK

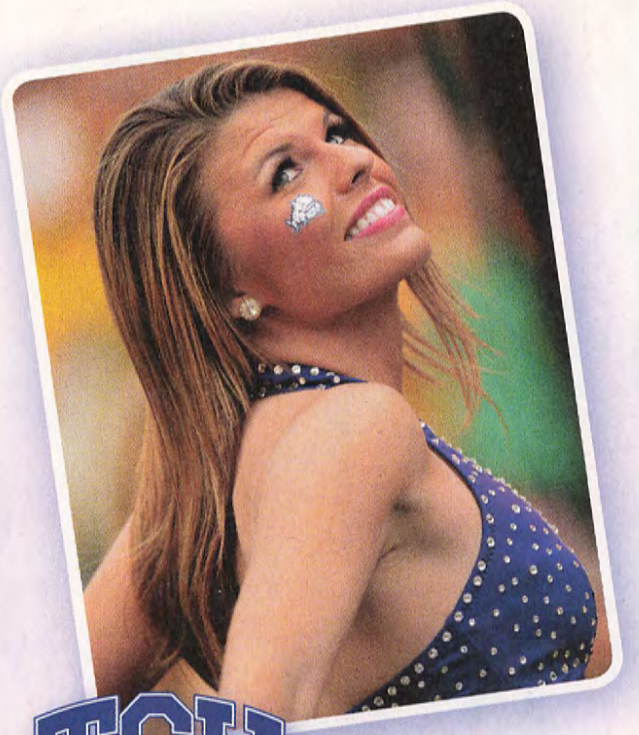
1. Wayne Lyons	Michigan
2. Fabian Moreau	UCLA
3. Jonathan Jones	Auburn
4. Kevon Seymour	USC
5. Taveze Calhoun	Mississippi State

STRONG SAFETY

1. Jeremy Cash	Duke
2. Karl Joseph	West Virginia
3. Michael Caputo	Wisconsin
4. Kenny Iloka	TCU
5. Isaiah Johnson	South Carolina

FREE SAFETY

1. Jalen Mills	LSU
2. Jamal Golden	Georgia Tech
3. Kodi Whitfield	Stanford
4. Deon Bush	Miami
5. LaDarrell McNeil	Tennessee



TCU

Sidelines 2015

Ucla FOOTBALL

BU
LSU
TIGERS
W

N
N
KU

ASU

ALABAMA
CRIMSON TIDE

Ucla
Ucla
FOOTBALL

OU
VIRGINIA
CHEER
Ole Miss
G

NATIONAL RECRUITING

National Top 25
By Barton Simmons

1. Alabama

For the unprecedented fifth consecutive year, Alabama landed the No. 1 class in the country and this time around Nick Saban did it with six 247Sports Composite five-stars, more than any other program. He also did it with a diverse geographical mix.

Calvin Ridley out of Fort Lauderdale was the nation's top receiver and the highest ranked player for the Tide at No. 11 overall. **Blake Barnett** comes in as the nation's No. 2 pro-style quarterback all the way from southern California. The Tide landed two of the top five cornerbacks with **Kendall Sheffield** out of Texas and **Minkah Fitzpatrick** out of New Jersey, both five-stars as well. More running back reinforcements are also on the way with the No. 1 running back in the country — **Damien Harris** — picking Alabama over his home-state Wildcats of Kentucky.

Even despite all of those elite skill players, the strength of this version of No. 1 for Alabama may be on the offensive interior. One year after bringing in a lot of edge tackle talent, Alabama brought in the nation's best crop of interior linemen with four of the nation's top 20 offensive guards. Included in that group is **Dallas Warmack**, the younger brother of current Tennessee Titan Chance Warmack. In addition, **Richie Petitbon** and **Lester Cotton** are the nation's fifth and fourth ranked guards respectively.

2. USC

For the second consecutive year, Steve Sarkisian had a near perfect finish to his recruiting class and this time it nearly resulted in the nation's top class. USC finished No. 2 by the narrowest of margins in the history of modern recruiting so this class features plenty of No. 1 characteristics.

Among those characteristics, USC was able to land the No.1 cornerback in the country according to 247Sports Composite in **Iman "Biggie" Marshall**. Marshall is the No. 4 player overall and committed to the Trojans on National Signing Day in a music video. Marshall was joined on Signing Day with announcements from five-star defensive tackle **Rasheem Green** and Top100 linebacker **John Houston** for USC. Houston is part of the top linebacking class in the country.

In addition to the long, athletic Houston, USC signed the two best players in Utah, both elite linebackers. **Porter Gustin** was the No. 4 outside linebacker in the country and at 6-5, 245 pounds, he could play almost any position on the field. **Osa Masina** was the No. 3 linebacker in the country and can do it all on either side of the ball as well.

Other highlights of the class include the nation's No. 1 offensive guard, **Chuma Edoga,** choosing USC all the way from Georgia, as well as two four-star Army All-American quarterbacks in **Ricky Town** and **Sam Darnold**. In total, USC had 11 U.S. Army All-American's in 2015.

3. Florida State

Even as talented as Florida State's roster has become under Jimbo Fisher, this 2015 class has several players that could see the field immediately for the Seminoles and no one is more ready than five-star safety **Derwin James**. At 6-2, 201 pounds, James is athletically gifted as any skill player in the nation for the class of 2015 and good enough to compete for a starting job as a true freshman.

Just as talented, though maybe not as college ready, is Virginia native **Josh Sweat** who brings as much edge athleticism as any pass-rusher in the country. Sweat and James are two of the four five-stars heading to Tallahassee, with the other two being big-bodied athletic wide receiver **George Campbell** and 6-3 cornerback **Tarvarus McFadden**.

The quarterback position was well-addressed for Florida State as well as Jimbo Fisher looks to add depth following the departure of Jameis Winston to the NFL. **Deondre Francois** was the No. 3 pro-style quarterback in the country and **De'Andre Johnson** was one of the state of Florida's most productive quarterbacks over the last four years.

Other major talents who should be factors down the road for Florida State include Top100 offensive tackle **Abdul Bello**, a 6-6, 295-pound mammoth talent, as well as running back **Jacques Patrick,** who at 6-2, 230-pounds can step in to provide a powerful complement to Dalvin Cook.

4. Tennessee

While the verdict is still out as to what kind of success Butch Jones can bring to Tennessee on the field, all doubt is gone as to what Jones can do on the recruiting trail. Jones upped his 2014 Top 10 class with a Top 5 finish in 2015, and he did it while addressing all the remaining talent voids on the current roster.

While the 2014 class was heavy on skill talent, 2015 brings some of the best line of scrimmage prospects in the country to Knoxville and five-star defensive tackle **Kahlil McKenzie** out of California leads the way. McKenzie at 6-3, 354 pounds will be a force on the defensive line for the Vols, eating up blockers and affecting the entire defense. Also on the line of scrimmage will be Nashville native **Kyle Phillips,** who emerged as one of the nation's top defensive linemen late in the process. He will complement Derek Barnett nicely. Four-star offensive tackles **Drew Richmond** and **Jack Jones** were the two best offensive linemen in Tennessee and should immediately bolster the offensive front as well.

Another area that Tennessee needed to add talent was at quarterback and with the additions of **Jauan Jennings, Quinten Dormady** and **Sheriron Jones**, the Vols are landing a rare class of three four-star quarterbacks. To top it off, Tennessee got the No. 2 junior college prospect in the country, former Alabama running back **Alvin Kamara**. We expect Kamara to impact the Tennessee offense immediately.

5. LSU

In recent years, LSU has come to be known as a destination for elite defensive back and running back talent and that holds true in the 2015 class for the Tigers. **Kevin Toliver II**, out of Jacksonville, continues LSU's tradition of big, athletic cornerbacks, bringing his 6-2 frame to Baton Rouge as the No. 2 cornerback in the nation. New Orleans native **Donte Jackson** doesn't have that kind of size, at 5-11, but he has unmatched speed and athleticism. He'll join Toliver in that always talented defensive backfield.

At running back, LSU has accumulated three Top247 backs, all with the size and power that has become the standard in Death Valley. **David Ducre** (5-11/238), **Derrius Guice** (5-11/213) and **Nick Brossette** (6-0/210) are all elite next-level prospects that can run through or around defenses.

Tyron Johnson brings size to the Tigers as well, but he brings it to the outside as a wide receiver. If LSU can find some quarterback play, Johnson should be a dynamic threat on the outside under Cam Cameron. The protection should be there. You won't find two better-looking offensive line prospects than 6-6, 305 pound **Chidi Valentine-Okeke** and 6-4.5, 340-pound guard **Maea Teuhema**.

6. Georgia

In a year that was absolutely loaded with big-time defensive line talent, the best of the bunch was south Georgia monster **Trent Thompson**. Thompson and his No. 1 ranking nationally stayed in state, signing with Georgia and ensuring that Mark Richt would bring home a Top 10 class for the second straight year.

Along with Thompson, Georgia added the No. 5 strongside defensive end (**Jonathan Ledbetter**) and the No. 5, 8, 9 and 15th ranked weakside defensive ends (**Natrez Patrick, D'Andre Walker, Chauncey Rivers, Michael Barnett**). With outside linebacker **Roquan Smith** added to the mix, defensive coordinator Jeremy Pruitt's front seven should be in great hands moving forward.

One of the most college-ready players to join the Georgia roster will be Columbia (Tenn.) Central tight end **Jackson Harris**. The 6-6, 250-pound prospect is not only an athletic pass catcher, but he's willing and able to block in the run game as well. While he may not be quite the college-ready talent that Harris is, **Terry Godwin** is a name to know as well. As versatile and athletic as any prospect in the country, Godwin is the nation's top athlete and can play either side of the ball in Athens.

7. Ohio State

While the significant bump from their national championship run should come in the 2016 class, Urban Meyer and the Buckeyes did plenty of work in 2015 to position themselves for several more runs at a title.

After a season in which three quarterbacks played at All-American levels for Ohio State, it's only fitting that two more four-stars are on their way to Columbus. Fort Lauderdale native **Torrance Gibson** may be the most athletic quarterback in the country and will be a great fit for Urban Meyer's offense, but there weren't many quarterbacks anywhere in the country that were more efficient and productive than in-state four-star **Joe Burrow**. Between the two, the depth at the position just keeps piling under Urban Meyer.

We love the way Ohio State evaluated at the defensive back position with guys like **Denzel Ward** and **Joshua Norwood** being stowaway players that can develop into NFL-type talents as they get bigger and stronger. The same can be said at offensive line. Ohio State recruited mass, size and upside up front with 6-9, 305-pounder **Kevin Feder** being the biggest and Army All-American guard **Matthew Burrell** being maybe the most physically ready.

At linebacker, the nation's No. 2 outside linebacker **Justin Hilliard** is joined by the No. 4 athlete in the country **Jerome Baker** as athletic front-seven talents, but the best of the class may be Cleveland St. Ignatius defensive end **Dre'Mont Jones** who was a standout in the U.S. Army All-American Game.

8. Clemson

Quietly Clemson has established itself as one of the top recruiting programs in the country under Dabo Swinney and the 2015 effort was as strong as any for the Tigers. With the No. 2 wide receiver in the country in **Deon Cain** and the No. 7 athlete in the country in **Ray Ray McCloud III**, Clemson has continued its incredible success recruiting elite skill players out of Florida, but the Tigers expanded to new territory as well with the signing of five-star defensive tackle **Christian Wilkins** out of Connecticut.

More regionally, Clemson found success in Georgia with **Mitch Hyatt**, the No. 2 offensive tackle in the country, and **Austin Bryant,** the No. 12 weakside defensive end. It also won a battle or two with rival South Carolina, most notably for defensive back **Mark Fields**. Fields was one of the top commits in South Carolina's 2015 class before decommitting and choosing the Tigers.

Out of Virginia, linebacker **Chad Smith** is one of the most athletic defenders in the entire class regardless of position, and **Clelin Ferrell** is a 6-5 edge-rusher to complement Wilkins in the middle.

Clemson looks all set at quarterback for a couple of years with **Deshaun Watson** under center, but that should give super-productive in-state talent **Kelly Bryant** some time to develop. At 6-4, 200-plus pounds with athleticism, Bryant has the tools.

9. Auburn

A late recruiting push buoyed by the arrival of defensive coordinator Will Muschamp helped push the Tigers into the national Top 10 on Signing Day — and much of that push was thanks to a strong close in the state of Florida. Within that close, Auburn signed Seffner (Fla.) Armwood defensive end **Byron Cowart**, the No. 3 player in the country and No. 1 weakside defensive end. Cowart is also the first guy you want walking off the bus on any team.

Along with Cowart, Auburn's late surge in the state of Florida included pickups from a phenomenal pass-rushing outside linebacker in **Jeffery Holland**, a dynamic slot receiver in **Ryan Davis** and one of the fastest prospects in the nation in two-way threat **Javarius Davis**.

Cowart is as college ready as anyone in the country, but Auburn also landed a prospect that has as much or more upside than any other prospect in the country. **Prince Tega Wanogho Jr.** is 6-8, 250 pounds, with elite athleticism, who is only one year in to the sport of football. He reclassified late from the class of 2016 to the class of 2015. The defensive end is the kind of physical freak that could develop into a Shawn Oakman-type of talent down the line.

Five-star junior college running back **Jovon Robinson**, Top100 athlete **Kerryon Johnson**, and athletic in-state linebacker **Richard McBryde** are all headline-worthy signees as well that could be early playing-time types.

10. Texas

After Texas A&M began to take the state away from the Longhorns over the past two years on the recruiting trail, Charlie Strong reclaimed some footing in 2015. One of the biggest turning points for Texas was the commitment of five-star linebacker **Malik Jefferson**, the best outside linebacker in the 2015 class and a freakish athlete. A longtime Texas A&M lean, Jefferson symbolized a turning point for Texas and it foreshadowed a slew of big-time in-state pickups late.

After Jefferson's commitment, a flurry of late pickups followed. Four-star Dallas linebacker **Anthony Wheeler** joined Jefferson to form one of the more athletic linebacker duos in the country. **Holton Hill** and **Kris Boyd** are two of the best in-state defensive backs in the 2015 class, and **Chris Warren** is a 6-2, 240-pound running back that happens to have elite speed as well.

Quarterback continues to be a point of emphasis for Charlie Strong and offensive coordinator Shawn Watson and the 2015 class saw the Longhorns steal Florida State commit **Kai Locksley** to answer that question.

Strong also dipped into his old Florida stomping ground to land four elite prospects led by Tallahassee wide receiver **John Burt**, the No. 14 wideout in the nation.

11. Texas A&M

The Aggies just missed out on another Top 10 class but still managed to hit on some crucial pieces in taking the next step under Kevin Sumlin. Most notably, another elite quarterback is heading to College Station in **Kyler Murray**. The No. 1 dual-threat quarterback in the country, Murray accumulated more than 10,000 passing yards and 4,000 rushing yards over the course of his high school career, as well as 186 total touchdowns.

As exciting as those quarterbacks are though, more important for Texas A&M was the addition they were able to garner on the defensive front. Five-star defensive tackle **Daylon Mack** is the kind of force up front on defense that the Aggies have been missing. Also on defense, the Aggies added two elite safeties in **Justin Dunning** and **Larry Pryor** and a U.S. Army All-American on the defensive line in **James Lockhart**.

While the defense is getting upgrades, the offense is getting reinforcements. Arizona native **Christian Kirk** is may be the top slot receiver in the country and should be very productive immediately for the Aggies. We also think that **Keaton Sutherland** is an offensive tackle that has a shot to continue Texas A&M's trend of putting offensive tackles into the first round of the NFL draft.

12. UCLA

With the departure of Brett Hundley to the NFL and the quarterback job wide open, UCLA's most important piece of the 2015 puzzle came in the form of quarterback **Josh Rosen**, a rare talent that has a legit opportunity to win the starting job as a true freshman. Rosen has size, arm talent, functional athleticism and he is an early enrollee that has spent the spring in Westwood. He was ranked by 247Sports Composite as the No. 1 quarterback in the nation.

Though Rosen is homegrown out of southern California, the rest of the class has a very national feel. **Soso Jamabo** out of Plano West High School in Texas comes in as the No. 2 running back in the country, **Chris Clark** out of Connecticut brings his 6-6 frame in as the No. 2 tight end in the country. **Josh Wariboko** out of Oklahoma, **Fred Ulu-Perry** out of Hawaii and **Andre James** out of Utah are all four-stars adding depth to the Bruins' developing offensive line.

The two other signature signings for this class were more local. **Keisean Lucier-South** is a five-star defensive end that has elite pass rushing ability and **DeChaun Holiday** is a cornerback with safety size who can cover.

13. Notre Dame

From the quarterback on down, Notre Dame got some of the best in the country in its 2015 class. **Brandon Wimbush** is ranked by 247Sports Composite as the No. 3 dual-threat quarterback in the country but there isn't a better arm anywhere. When the 6-2, 205-pounder flipped his commitment from Penn State to Notre Dame, that put a huge stamp on the Irish's class.

The talent around Wimbush starts up front on both sides of the ball with **Tristen Hoge**, the nephew of former NFL running back Merril Hoge checking in as the nation's No. 1 center. On defense, **Jerry Tillery** out of Shreveport, La., is the No. 11 offensive tackle in the country but will start out on the defensive side of the ball for the Irish. At 6-6, 308 pounds, Tillery has rare athleticism.

A four-star trio of **Tevon Coney**, **Josh Barajas** and **Asmar Bilal** add elite depth to the Notre Dame linebacking corps, while **Dexter Williams** adds dynamic athleticism at running back. **Aliz'e Jones** brings matchup issues for defenses at the tight end position as the nation's No. 1 tight end in 2015 and keep an eye on **CJ Sanders** as an undersized but productive and polished wide receiver.

14. Penn State

As James Franklin continues to put his stamp on the Penn State program from a recruiting standpoint, a focus has been placed on winning the home state and winning the home region. In 2015, Penn State was able to accomplish that. In the state of Pennsylvania, the staff extended 14 offers in the 2015 class. Twelve of those prospects are heading to Happy Valley this fall. That's a dominating effort.

Among those 12 signees, running back **Saquon Barkley**, defensive end **Ryan Buchholz**, linebacker **Jake Cooper** and cornerback **John Reid** are among the prospects expected to have the biggest impact. Barkley emerged on the camp circuit after his junior season and then had a monster senior season. Cooper and Buchholz also put together outstanding senior efforts on film, while Reid was one of the most productive prospects over the course of his career in the state.

As effective as Penn State was in recruiting the high school ranks, maybe its most important recruit came from junior college. **Paris Palmer** at 6-8, 300-plus pounds may be an instant contributor as Penn State tries to shore up an offensive line that was a weakness during the 2014 season.

From outside the state, **Garrett Taylor** was one of the nation's most highly recruited cornerbacks out of Virginia and **Juwan Johnson** out of New Jersey may be the most physically imposing receiver body in this class.

15. Oklahoma

With eight prospects enrolling early at Oklahoma there are several early impact candidates that could emerge out of the 2015 effort for Bob Stoops and perhaps none are more capable of making a splash than **Dede Westbrook** out of Blinn Community College. Westbrook led the nation in receiving as a JUCO sophomore and has the kind of route-running ability and maturity to be a factor immediately.

One prospect that we don't expect to contribute right away is defensive tackle signee **Neville Gallimore**. The U.S. Army All-American and 247Sports Top100 prospect hails from Canada and injured his knee in the winter. He will be in recovery and rehab mode through the spring and summer, but long term there may not be a defensive lineman in this class with more upside.

In terms of upside, Oklahoma has landed prospects all over the field worth a mention. **Will Sunderland** is a 6-3 safety with elite speed and athleticism who has a chance to add weight and grow into a scary back-end defender. Defensive lineman **Gabriel Campbell** out of Yazoo City Mississippi is a massive athlete who earned a four-star grade on 247Sports based purely on upside. Meanwhile **Dahu Green** is an in-state find that could be a big-time wide receiver at 6-4, 205 pounds.

16. Oregon

More speed and length are heading to Eugene to ensure that Oregon teams of the future look very similar to the high-scoring Oregon teams of the recent past. **Taj Griffin** out of Powder Springs (Ga.) McEachern was the No. 1 all-purpose back in the country according to the 247Sports Composite rankings and has DeAnthony Thomas big-play ability. Five-star defensive end **Canton Kaumatule,** at 6-7 290, is a carbon copy of Arik Armstead. Offensive tackle **Brady Aiello** at six-foot-six could be the next Jake Fisher on the offensive line based on length and athleticism.

The quarterback of the future looks similar to the quarterbacks of the past as well. Anaheim (Calif.) Servite U.S. Army All-American **Travis Waller** rushed for more than 2,000 yards and 26 touchdowns in his final two high school seasons, while also passing for close to 3,500 yards.

The common theme for Oregon once again though is speed and length. Eight signees in the 2015 class are 6-5 or taller. In Griffin, and fellow all-purpose backs **Kirk Merritt** and **Malik Lovette** there isn't a man among them that runs slower than a 4.4 40-yard dash and even 6-3 safety **Dylan Kane** is a 100-meter champion out of Hawaii.

17. Ole Miss

For the second consecutive year, Ole Miss landed one of the top offensive guards in the nation out of its own state, this time with **Javon Patterson**. Patterson, ranked as the No. 3 offensive guard in the country per 247Sports Composite and will join Roderick Taylor who was ranked No. 2 at the position one year earlier.

Patterson enrolled early at Ole Miss and was joined by four JUCO commits as early enrollees. Included in that group was the nation's No. 1 JUCO defensive tackle in **D.J. Jones,** as well as the nation's No. 1 JUCO CB in **Tony Bridges**. Even those guys aren't as important as the arrival of **Chad Kelly** from East Mississippi Community College. The Clemson bounce-back will arrive with an opportunity to be an answer at quarterback for the Rebels as Hugh Freeze looks to replace Bo Wallace at the quarterback position.

If he wins the job, Kelly will inherit a talented roster of receivers that is only getting stronger with the arrival of the class of 2015. **Damarkus Lodge** out of Cedar Hill, Texas and **Van Jefferson** out of Brentwood, Tenn., constitute one of the better wide receiver tandems in the country in this class.

Other prospects that we're bullish on include offensive tackle **Alex Givens**, safety **Armani Linton** and quarterback **Jason Pellerin**, an extremely talented kid that just needs some time to develop under center.

18. Mississippi State

While some programs try to reinvent themselves on the recruiting trail, Dan Mullen continues to focus on the approach that led to a breakout season in 2014. That approach consists of recruiting extremely well in the state of Mississippi, its border states and the junior college ranks. With the 2015 effort, the Bulldogs did just that, landing 12 in-state commits and another four Mississippi JUCO signees. Among that JUCO group, electric speedster **Donald Gray** leads the way along with the No. 1 junior college offensive tackle **Martinas Rankin**.

From the high school ranks, a foundation of four-star LB **Leo Lewis**, Army All-American safety **Jamal Peters** and athletic defensive end **Fletcher Adams** will bring Mississippi State elite playmakers at all three levels of the defense. Joining the 6-3 frame of Peters, there is length all over the secondary in this 2015 group with 6-1 cornerback **Chris Stamps** and 6-3 safety **Mark McLaurin** also roaming the back end.

Offensively, the Bulldogs are bringing in dynamic, explosive athletes led by Memphis athlete **Deddrick Thomas** and Jackson-area standout **Malik Dear**. At running back **Nick Gibson** is a thick, powerful back coming in alongside all-purpose back **Keith Mixon**.

19. South Carolina

What was once a top 10 class lost some luster late in the process as the Gamecocks dealt with numerous late decommitments. Still, Steve Spurrier was able to reel in a top-20 class and with it comes one of the elite defensive prospects in the junior college system for the 2015 cycle. **Marquavius**

Lewis at 6-4, 266 pounds comes to Columbia as the No. 3 JUCO prospect in the country and the No. 1 strongside defensive end. He won't be alone up front, as six-foot-4, 302-pound DE **Dexter Wideman** — a 2014 signee for South Carolina — re-signed in 2015 as a prep school prospect and is the nation's No. 1 prep school recruit. With **Dante Sawyer** and **Shameik Blackshear** included in the class, South Carolina is getting four four-star level defensive linemen to add to its defense.

Though it wasn't a big group, South Carolina found some big bodies on the offensive line — Offensive guard **Trey Derouen**; 6-7 offensive tackle **Blake Camper**; 6-7, offensive tackle **Christian Pellage,** and the best of the bunch, 6-5, 315-pounder **Zack Bailey,** combine to bring a lot of beef to the line of scrimmage on the offensive side in Columbia.

20. Arizona State

If you're looking for an emerging power on the recruiting trail, look in the direction of Tempe and Arizona State. The Pac-12 has collectively been on the rise from a talent accumulation perspective and Arizona State is one of the drivers of that boon. In 2015, the crown jewel is U.S. Army All-American quarterback **Brady White**. The four-star is one of two elite arms that offensive coordinator Mike Norvell is bringing in, with the other being a very talented prospect in his own right, in-state talent **Bryce Perkins**.

On the national front, Arizona State also dipped into Louisiana for a talented defensive end named **Jalen Bates** and got all the way to Virginia for four-star Army All-American **Jaason Lewis**. Even Tennessee had a Sun Devil footprint with a pickup from late-rising cornerback **Kareem Orr** out of Chattanooga.

Ultimately this class was driven by a strong California presence though and Arizona State was able to land some of the truly elite California prospects, namely jumbo athlete **Jay Jay Wilson**, linebacker **Khaylan Thomas** and defensive end **Joseph Wicker**. All were four-stars and all have a chance to be special.

21. Florida

In the weeks leading up to National Signing Day, Florida's recruiting class under first-year head coach Jim McElwain was ranked dead last in the SEC and well outside the national top 50. That Florida landed inside the Top 25 is a testament to the close that Florida's new staff was able to put together down the stretch.

That home-stretch close was spearheaded by two huge commitments that weren't announced until Signing Day: **Martez Ivey** (the top offensive tackle in the country and the No. 2 player overall) and **CeCe Jefferson** (the No. 2 strongside defensive end in the country and No. 7 player overall). Those two five-stars had long been considered Florida leans, but needed an excuse to commit to the Gators. McElwain gave them that excuse and ultimately they turned a good class into potentially a great one.

Other big gets down the stretch for Florida included former Miami RB commit out of powerhouse St. Thoams Aquinas HS, **Jordan Scarlett**, four-star Miami native **Jordan Cronkrite**, Tallahassee four-star athlete **D'Anfernee McGriff** and maybe the sleeper of the class **Jabari Zuniga**.

22. Michigan State

With Mark Dantonio at the helm, Michigan State typically brings in modest recruiting classes that produce big-time results on the field and in the NFL draft. This top 25 effort features a group that could have that same kind of upside.

One prospect that will have a hard time outplaying his ranking is **Larry Scott** out of Hubbard, Ohio and that's only because he comes in ranked as a borderline five-star. The 6-2, 230-pound bruiser has the look of a productive feature back in the Big Ten that can set the tone for an offense.

Two other tone-setters coming to East Lansing will be at home on the line of scrimmage with Detroit's **Kyonta Stallworth** and Chicago's **Raequan Williams**. The 6-4, 276-pound Stallworth is a physical offensive line presence, while Williams is a late-rising athletic defensive tackle. Both were ranked in the Top 20 nationally at their position.

At the quarterback position, **Brian Lewerke** is a big, smooth, accurate passer out of Phoenix, Ariz., and his future primary target, 6-2 **Felton Davis** III out of Virginia, should combine for a lot of downfield connections over the next few years.

23. Arkansas

In the 2015 edition of Bret Bielema's transformation of the Arkansas football program, we see an unprecedented influx of talent at the tight end position.

Offensive line has become a strength in Fayetteville and tight end is just an extension of that. With three of the top 20 tight ends in the country part of this class, we think all three have NFL upside. **Will Gragg** (6-4/245), **C.J. O'Grady** (6-4/230) and **Austin Cantrell** (6-4/249) are all big bodies, with frames that can create matchup problems as both blockers and receivers.

Despite the tight end talent coming in, Bielema didn't neglect the true offensive linemen either. Six-foot-6 in-state talent **Colton Jackson** could be a local steal, while **Jalen Merrick** out of New Smyrna Beach, Fla., was the national recruiting win for the Hogs.

On the defensive line **Hjalte Froholdt** brings a big 6-4, 280-pound frame to the line of scrimmage to add a physical presence up front and **Jamario Bell**, from an athleticism, size and upside standpoint could be one of the top long-term names to emerge from this group. We think the Razorbacks found themselves a major steal out of Georgia as well in defensive end **T.J. Smith** who dominated for the best team in Georgia as a senior.

24. Stanford

Stanford has become very much a national brand over the course of the last 10 years and this 2015 class is a great illustration of that national draw. Thirteen different states are represented within David Shaw's 22 signees and they come from every geographical corner: New Jersey to Ohio to Tennessee, Florida, Utah, Louisiana and Washington. Of course, California is also well represented with precise route-runner **Trent Irwin** and big cornerback **Frank Buncom IV** coming in as the highest ranked commits in the 2015 class.

While Stanford is no stranger to Louisiana, the Cardinal beat out LSU and other regional powers for safety **Justin Reid** with the help of a local celebrity. Reid is the younger brother of San Francisco 49ers safety and former LSU standout Eric Reid. His brother's familiarity with the area no doubt helped Stanford land one of the biggest steals of the 2015 class.

Along with Buncom and Reid, Stanford added **Ben Edwards** out of Florida and **Quenton Meeks** out of the San Diego area to put together what was quietly one of the best defensive back classes in the country.

25. Missouri

The Tigers are always unearthing recruiting gems and turning them into NFL talents and this year we think they found one of their biggest sleepers yet…literally. At 6-7, 220-pounds, wide receiver **Justin Smith** out of Dublin (Ga.) West Laurens could be a phenomenal mismatch on the outside in the Tigers spread offense. Nobody is talking about him, but he could be one of the top talents in this Missouri class.

The guy everyone is talking about is five-star defensive tackle **Terry Beckner Jr.**, and rightly so. Beckner is an East St. Louis (Ill.) High School product and was ranked by 247Sports Composite as the No. 3 defensive tackle in the country in a phenomenal year at the position. On the other side of the ball, junior college offensive tackle **Malik Cuellar** could compete for early playing time on the line of scrimmage.

The defensive sleeper to watch is **Terez Hall** out of Lithonia (Ga.) Martin Luther King. The 6-3, active, athletic linebacker was a late riser on the recruiting trail and we think he's an impact guy.

At quarterback, Gary Pinkel got his man. Army All-American **Drew Lock** is 6-3 with a great frame, a great arm and great athleticism. He's a high major basketball recruit but has NFL talent under center.

100 FOR 2015

INCOMING FRESHMEN

TOP 100 PLAYERS

Rk.	Name	Pos	Ht.	Wt.	High School/Hometown	School
1.	Trent Thompson	DT	6-2.5	313	Westover (Albany, GA)	Georgia
2.	Martez Ivey	OT	6-5.5	275	Apopka (Apopka, FL)	Florida
3.	Byron Cowart	SDE	6-4	250	Armwood (Seffner, FL)	Auburn
4.	Iman Marshall	CB	6-1	190	Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, CA)	USC
5.	Derwin James	S	6-2	201	Haines City Senior (Haines City, FL)	Florida State
6.	Kahlil McKenzie	DT	6-3	354	Clayton Valley (Concord, CA)	Tennessee
7.	CeCe Jefferson	SDE	6-2	275	Baker County Senior (Glen Saint Mary, FL)	Florida
8.	Kevin Toliver II	CB	6-2	185	Trinity Christian Academy (Jacksonville, FL)	LSU
9.	Josh Sweat	WDE	6-5	240	Oscar Smith (Chesapeake, VA)	Florida State
10.	Malik Jefferson	OLB	6-2.5	215	Poteet (Mesquite, TX)	Texas
11.	Calvin Ridley	WR	6-0	170	Monarch (Pompano Beach, FL)	Alabama
12.	Josh Rosen	PRO	6-4	205	St. John Bosco (Bellflower, CA)	UCLA
13.	Terry Beckner Jr.	DT	6-4	293	East St. Louis (East Saint Louis, IL)	Missouri
14.	Daylon Mack	DT	6-1	330	Gladewater (Gladewater, TX)	Texas A&M
15.	Tarvarus McFadden	CB	6-2	198	American Heritage (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	Florida State
16.	Canton Kaumatule	SDE	6-7	290	Punahou (Honolulu, HI)	Oregon
17.	Keisean Lucier-South	WDE	6-4	208	Lutheran - Orange County (Orange, CA)	UCLA
18.	Deon Cain	WR	6-1.5	194	Tampa Bay Tech (Tampa, FL)	Clemson
19.	George Campbell	WR	6-3	184	East Lake (Tarpon Springs, FL)	Florida State
20.	Kendall Sheffield	CB	6-0	181	Fort Bend Marshall (Missouri City, TX)	Alabama
21.	Blake Barnett	PRO	6-4.5	200	Santiago (Corona, CA)	Alabama
22.	Mitch Hyatt	OT	6-5	272	North Gwinnett (Suwanee, GA)	Clemson
23.	Rasheem Green	DT	6-5	275	Junipero Serra (Gardena, CA)	USC
24.	Christian Wilkins	DT	6-4	290	Suffield Academy (Suffield, CT)	Clemson
25.	Christian Kirk	WR	5-10	191	Saguaro (Scottsdale, AZ)	Texas A&M
26.	Chuma Edoga	OG	6-3	280	McEachern (Powder Springs, GA)	USC
27.	Tyron Johnson	WR	6-1	191	Warren Easton (New Orleans, LA)	LSU
28.	Terry Godwin	ATH	6-0	168	Callaway (Hogansville, GA)	Georgia
29.	Daron Payne	DT	6-2	325	Shades Valley (Birmingham, AL)	Alabama
30.	Minkah Fitzpatrick	CB	6-1	198	St. Peters Prep (Jersey City, NJ)	Alabama
31.	Damien Harris	RB	5-11	205	Madison Southern (Berea, KY)	Alabama
32.	Soso Jamabo	RB	6-2.5	210	Plano West (Plano, TX)	UCLA
33.	Kyler Murray	DUAL	5-10	180	Allen (Allen, TX)	Texas A&M
34.	Justin Hilliard	OLB	6-0	225	St. Xavier (Cincinnati, OH)	Ohio State
35.	Osa Masina	OLB	6-3.5	230	Brighton (Salt Lake City, UT)	USC
36.	Kyle Phillips	SDE	6-3.5	250	Hillsboro (Nashville, TN)	Tennessee
37.	Maea Teuhema	OG	6-4.5	340	Keller (Keller, TX)	LSU
38.	Jarrett Stidham	DUAL	6-4	195	Stephenville (Stephenville, TX)	Baylor
39.	Jacques Patrick	RB	6-1.5	230	Timber Creek (Orlando, FL)	Florida State
40.	Ronald Jones II	RB	6-0	185	McKinney North (Mckinney, TX)	USC
41.	Porter Gustin	OLB	6-5	245	Salem Hills (Salem, UT)	USC
42.	Kerryon Johnson	ATH	6-0	200	Madison Academy (Madison, AL)	Auburn
43.	Damarkus Lodge	WR	6-2.5	190	Cedar Hill (Cedar Hill, TX)	Ole Miss
44.	Deionte Thompson	S	6-2	181	West Orange-Stark (Orange, TX)	Alabama
45.	Brandon Wimbush	DUAL	6-2	205	St. Peters Prep (Jersey City, NJ)	Notre Dame
46.	Derrius Guice	RB	5-10.5	213	Catholic (Baton Rouge, LA)	LSU
47.	Roquan Smith	OLB	6-2	207	Macon County (Montezuma, GA)	Georgia
48.	Preston Williams	WR	6-4	191	Lovejoy (Hampton, GA)	Tennessee
49.	John Houston	OLB	6-3	211	Junipero Serra (Gardena, CA)	USC
50.	Breiden Fehoko	DT	6-3	290	Farrington (Honolulu, HI)	Texas Tech
51.	Taj Griffin	APB	5-10	175	McEachern (Powder Springs, GA)	Oregon
52.	Javon Patterson	OG	6-2.5	317	Petal (Petal, MS)	Ole Miss
53.	Shy Tuttle	DT	6-3	320	North Davidson (Lexington, NC)	Tennessee
54.	Lester Cotton	OG	6-4	325	Central Sch (Tuscaloosa, AL)	Alabama
55.	Drew Richmond	OT	6-5	310	Memphis University School (Memphis, TN)	Tennessee
56.	Donte Jackson	ATH	5-11	164	Riverdale (New Orleans, LA)	LSU
57.	Jalen Dalton	WDE	6-5	235	West Forsyth (Clemmons, NC)	North Carolina
58.	Jamal Peters	S	6-1.5	206	Bassfield (Bassfield, MS)	Mississippi State
59.	Larry Scott	RB	6-2	228	Hubbard (Hubbard, OH)	Michigan State
60.	Marvell Tell	S	6-1.5	188	Crespi (Encino, CA)	USC
61.	Jerome Baker	ATH	6-2	203	Benedictine (Cleveland, OH)	Ohio State
62.	Aliz'e Jones	TE	6-4.5	218	Bishop Gorman (Las Vegas, NV)	Notre Dame
63.	Leo Lewis	ILB	6-3	225	Brookhaven (Brookhaven, MS)	Mississippi State
64.	Richie Petitbon	OG	6-4	301	Gonzaga (Washington, DC)	Alabama
65.	Deondre Francois	PRO	6-1	195	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	Florida State
66.	Jonathan Ledbetter	SDE	6-4	265	Tucker (Tucker, GA)	Georgia
67.	Brady White	PRO	6-0.5	180	Hart (Newhall, CA)	Arizona State
68.	DeChaun Holiday	CB	6-3	195	Mission Hills (San Marcos, CA)	UCLA
69.	Jacob Daniel	DT	6-4	310	Clovis North (Clovis, CA)	USC
70.	Trent Irwin	WR	6-1.5	189	Hart (Newhall, CA)	Stanford
71.	Jake Browning	PRO	6-2	185	Folsom (Folsom, CA)	Washington
72.	Neville Gallimore	DT	6-2	330	Canada Prep Football Acad. (St. Catharines, ON)	Oklahoma
73.	Anthony Wheeler	OLB	6-2	225	Skyline (Dallas, TX)	Texas
74.	Brian Cole	ATH	6-2	190	Heritage (Saginaw, MI)	Michigan
75.	Johnny Frasier	RB	5-10	229	Princeton (Princeton, NC)	N.C. State
76.	Torrance Gibson	ATH	6-4	204	American Heritage (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	Ohio State
77.	Chris Warren	RB	6-2	240	Rockwall (Rockwall, TX)	Texas
78.	Michael Weber	RB	5-9.5	219	Cass Technical (Detroit, MI)	Ohio State
79.	Ricky Town	PRO	6-3	206	St. Bonaventure (Ventura, CA)	USC
80.	Holton Hill	CB	6-2	184	Lamar (Houston, TX)	Texas
81.	Ray-Ray McCloud III	ATH	5-9	175	Sickles (Tampa, FL)	Clemson
82.	Arden Key	WDE	6-5	230	Hapeville Charter (Atlanta, GA)	LSU
83.	Mark Walton	RB	5-10	179	Booker T. Washington (Miami, FL)	Miami
84.	Ykili Ross	CB	6-0.5	175	Polytechnic (Riverside, CA)	USC
85.	Chris Clark	TE	6-6	247	Avon Old Farms (Avon, CT)	UCLA
86.	Ricky DeBerry	ILB	6-2.5	240	Atlee (Mechanicsville, VA)	Oklahoma
87.	Joseph Wicker	SDE	6-2	278	Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, CA)	Arizona State
88.	Natrez Patrick	WDE	6-3	259	Mays (Atlanta, GA)	Georgia
89.	Tristen Hoge	OC	6-4	276	Highland (Pocatello, ID)	Notre Dame
90.	Daylon Charlot	WR	6-0	193	Patterson (Patterson, LA)	Alabama
91.	Jashon Cornell	SDE	6-4	260	Cretin Derham Hall (Saint Paul, MN)	Ohio State
92.	Albert Huggins	DT	6-3	283	Orangeburg-Wilkinson (Orangeburg, SC)	Clemson
93.	Abdul Bello	OT	6-6	295	Montverde Academy (Montverde, FL)	Florida State
94.	Dexter Williams	RB	6-0	192	West Orange (Winter Garden, FL)	Notre Dame
95.	Mark Fields	CB	5-11	190	William Amos Hough (Cornelius, NC)	Clemson
96.	Drew Lock	PRO	6-3.5	205	Lee's Summit Sr. (Lees Summit, MO)	Missouri
97.	Isaiah Langley	CB	5-11.5	161	Foothill (Pleasanton, CA)	USC
98.	Kris Boyd	CB	5-11.5	185	Gilmer (Gilmer, TX)	Texas
99.	Da'Vante Phillips	WR	6-2	204	Miami Central (Miami, FL)	Florida State
100.	Eric Glover-Williams	CB	5-11	165	McKinley (Canton, OH)	Ohio State

100 FOR 2016

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

TOP 100 PLAYERS

Rk.	Name	Pos	Ht.	Wt.	High School/Hometown	School
1.	Rashan Gary	DT	6-4	290	Paramus Catholic (Paramus, NJ)	
2.	Gregory Little	OT	6-5.5	305	Allen (Allen, TX)	Texas A&M
3.	Jacob Eason	PRO	6-5	205	Lake Stevens Sr (Lake Stevens, WA)	Georgia
4.	Derrick Brown	DT	6-4	305	Lanier (Buford, GA)	
5.	Shavar Manuel	SDE	6-5	262	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	
6.	Levonta Taylor	CB	5-11	182	Ocean Lakes (Virginia Beach, VA)	Florida State
7.	Nick Bosa	SDE	6-4	265	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	
8.	Lyndell Wilson	OLB	6-2	220	Carver (Montgomery, AL)	
9.	Saivion Smith	CB	6-1	175	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	LSU
10.	Kareem Walker	RB	6-1	210	De Paul Catholic (Wayne, NJ)	Ohio State
11.	Julian Rochester	DT	6-5.5	315	McEachern (Powder Springs, GA)	
12.	Keion Joyner	OLB	6-3	200	Havelock (Havelock, NC)	
13.	Rashard Lawrence	DT	6-3	305	Neville (Monroe, LA)	
14.	Ed Oliver	DT	6-2	277	Westfield (Houston, TX)	
15.	Patrick Hudson	OT	6-5.5	325	Silsbee (Silsbee, TX)	Baylor
16.	Edwin Alexander	DT	6-2	310	St. Thomas Aquinas (Hammond, LA)	LSU
17.	Shea Patterson	PRO	6-2	195	Calvary Baptist Academy (Shreveport, LA)	Ole Miss
18.	Dexter Lawrence	DT	6-5	310	Wake Forest-Rolesville (Wake Forest, NC)	
19.	Caleb Kelly	OLB	6-3	215	Clovis West (Fresno, CA)	
20.	Ben Davis	OLB	6-4	230	Gordo Sch (Gordo, AL)	
21.	Brandon Jones	S	5-11	183	Nacogdoches (Nacogdoches, TX)	
22.	Willie Allen	OT	6-7.5	300	John Curtis (New Orleans, LA)	
23.	Nate Craig-Myers	WR	6-2	205	Tampa Catholic (Tampa, FL)	Auburn
24.	Tavien Feaster	RB	6-0	193	Spartanburg (Spartanburg, SC)	Clemson
25.	Marlon Davidson	SDE	6-4	260	Carver (Montgomery, AL)	
26.	Malik Henry	PRO	6-3	180	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	Florida State
27.	Ben Bredeson	OT	6-5	270	Arrowhead (Hartland, WI)	
28.	Isaac Nauta	TE	6-4	237	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	Florida State
29.	Eric Monroe	S	6-0	180	North Shore (Houston, TX)	
30.	Demetris Robertson	ATH	6-1	165	Savannah Christian Prep (Savannah, GA)	
31.	KJ Costello	PRO	6-4	213	Santa Margarita Cath. (Rancho Santa Margarita, CA)	Stanford
32.	Tyler Vaughns	WR	6-3	175	Bishop Amat (La Puente, CA)	
33.	Shyheim Carter	CB	6-0	190	Kentwood (Kentwood, LA)	Alabama
34.	Janarius Robinson	WDE	6-5	250	Bay (Panama City, FL)	Florida State
35.	Kristian Fulton	CB	6-0	165	Archbishop Rummel (Metairie, LA)	
36.	Tommy Kraemer	OT	6-5	305	Elder (Cincinnati, OH)	Notre Dame
37.	Michal Menet	OT	6-5	265	Exeter Township Senior HS (Reading, PA)	
38.	Trayvon Mullen	CB	6-2	175	Coconut Creek (Pompano Beach, FL)	
39.	Mique Juarez	OLB	6-2	210	North High School (Torrance, CA)	USC
40.	Antwuan Jackson	DT	6-2.5	285	Cedar Grove (Ellenwood, GA)	
41.	Deontay Anderson	S	6-1	192	Manvel (Manvel, TX)	
42.	E.J. Price	OT	6-6	311	Archer (Lawrenceville, GA)	Georgia
43.	Demario McCall	RB	5-11	180	North Ridgeville (North Ridgeville, OH)	Ohio State
44.	Devin Duvernay	WR	5-11	195	Sachse (Sachse, TX)	
45.	Feleipe Franks	DUAL	6-5	220	Wakulla (Crawfordville, FL)	LSU
46.	Ben Cleveland	OT	6-7	322	Stephens County (Toccoa, GA)	Georgia
47.	Devin Asiasi	ATH	6-5	260	De La Salle (Concord, CA)	
48.	Breland Brandt	WDE	6-4	220	Windward School (Los Angeles, CA)	UCLA
49.	Shane Simmons	WDE	6-4	221	DeMatha Catholic (Hyattsville, MD)	Penn State
50.	McTelvin Agim	SDE	6-2.5	268	Hope (Hope, AR)	
51.	Sam Bruce	WR	5-8	160	St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	Miami
52.	Rahshaun Smith	WDE	6-3	225	IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL)	Clemson
53.	Lokeni Toailoa	ILB	6-1	212	Wilmer Amina Carter (Rialto, CA)	UCLA
54.	Michael Divinity	OLB	6-2	218	John Ehret (Marrero, LA)	
55.	Boss Tagaloa	DT	6-3	295	De La Salle (Concord, CA)	
56.	Kaden Smith	TE	6-5.5	235	Marcus (Flower Mound, TX)	Stanford
57.	Jonah Williams	OT	6-5	272	Folsom (Folsom, CA)	Alabama
58.	Kyle Davis	WR	6-3	211	Archer (Lawrenceville, GA)	South Carolina
59.	Benito Jones	DT	6-2	260	Wayne County (Waynesboro, MS)	Ole Miss
60.	John Raridon	OG	6-4	260	Valley (West Des Moines, IA)	Nebraska
61.	Dwayne Haskins	PRO	6-3	198	The Bullis School (Potomac, MD)	
62.	Miles Sanders	RB	5-10	195	Woodland Hills (Pittsburgh, PA)	Penn State
63.	Nigel Warrior	S	6-0	175	Peachtree Ridge (Suwanee, GA)	
64.	Kendell Jones	DT	6-4.5	361	Shoemaker (Killeen, TX)	
65.	Nigel Knott	CB	5-11	175	Germantown (Madison, MS)	
66.	DeKaylin Metcalf	WR	6-3	195	Oxford (Oxford, MS)	Ole Miss
67.	Jack Jones	ATH	5-10	170	Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, CA)	
68.	Eli Stove	WR	6-1	178	Niceville (Niceville, FL)	
69.	Marquez Callaway	ATH	6-2	170	Warner Robins (Warner Robins, GA)	
70.	Dylan Crawford	WR	6-1	175	Santa Margarita Cath. (Rancho Santa Margarita, CA)	
71.	Chauncey Manac	WDE	6-3	220	Clinch County (Homerville, GA)	Georgia
72.	Oluwole Betiku	SDE	6-3.5	240	Junipero Serra (Gardena, CA)	
73.	Josh King	SDE	6-6	250	Hinsdale South (Darien, IL)	
74.	Dee Anderson	WR	6-4	177	West Mesquite (Mesquite, TX)	LSU
75.	Stephen Sullivan	WR	6-5	230	Donaldsonville (Donaldsonville, LA)	LSU
76.	Scott Lashley	OT	6-6	300	West Point (West Point, MS)	
77.	Erick Fowler	WDE	6-1	232	Manor (Manor, TX)	
78.	Baveon Johnson	OC	6-3	310	Lake Gibson (Lakeland, FL)	Florida State
79.	Ahmir Mitchell	ATH	6-2	190	Cedar Creek (Egg Harbor City, NJ)	
80.	Liam Eichenberg	OT	6-6	290	St. Ignatius (Cleveland, OH)	Notre Dame
81.	Brendan Ferns	ILB	6-3	223	St. Clairsville (Saint Clairsville, OH)	
82.	Trevon Diggs	ATH	6-0	183	The Avalon School (Bethesda, MD)	
83.	Jordan Elliott	DT	6-4	305	Westside (Houston, TX)	
84.	George Hill	RB	6-0	200	Hubbard (Hubbard, OH)	Ohio State
85.	Devin White	ATH	6-0.5	235	North Webster (Springhill, LA)	
86.	Binjimen Victor	WR	6-4	170	Coconut Creek (Pompano Beach, FL)	
87.	Justin Madubuike	SDE	6-3	255	McKinney North (Mckinney, TX)	
88.	Terrance Davis	OG	6-4	305	DeMatha Catholic (Hyattsville, MD)	
89.	Darnell Salomon	WR	6-3	198	Miami Central (Miami, FL)	
90.	Jeffrey McCulloch	OLB	6-2.5	230	Aldine Davis (Houston, TX)	
91.	Mecole Hardman Jr.	CB	5-11	170	Elbert County (Elberton, GA)	
92.	Jake Hausmann	TE	6-5	235	Archbishop Moeller (Cincinnati, OH)	Ohio State
93.	Prince Sammons	SDE	6-8	280	Cincinnati Hills Christian Acad. (Cincinnati, OH)	
94.	Jawon Pass	DUAL	6-5	220	Carver (Columbus, GA)	
95.	Clark Yarbrough	OT	6-6	270	Woodberry Forest (Woodberry Forest, VA)	
96.	Jean Delance	OT	6-5	281	North Mesquite (Mesquite, TX)	
97.	John Broussard	CB	6-0	164	Central (Phenix City, AL)	
98.	Brandon Burton	S	6-2	195	Junipero Serra (Gardena, CA)	
99.	Daelin Hayes	OLB	6-4	250	Skyline (Ann Arbor, MI)	USC
100.	Shurod Thompson	S	6-1	185	Liberty (Brentwood, CA)	California

TOP 5 PLAYERS
BY POSITION

Rk.	Name	Pos	Ht.	Wt.	High School/Hometown	School
QUARTERBACKS						
12.	Josh Rosen	PRO	6-4	205	St. John Bosco (Bellflower, CA)	UCLA
21.	Blake Barnett	PRO	6-4.5	200	Santiago (Corona, CA)	Alabama
33.	Kyler Murray	DUAL	5-10	180	Allen (Allen, TX)	Texas A&M
38.	Jarrett Stidham	DUAL	6-4	195	Stephenville (Stephenville, TX)	Baylor
45.	Brandon Wimbush	DUAL	6-2	205	St. Peters Prep (Jersey City, NJ)	Notre Dame
RUNNING BACKS						
31.	Damien Harris	RB	5-11	205	Madison Southern (Berea, KY)	Alabama
32.	Soso Jamabo	RB	6-2.5	210	Plano West (Plano, TX)	UCLA
39.	Jacques Patrick	RB	6-1.5	230	Timber Creek (Orlando, FL)	Florida State
40.	Ronald Jones II	RB	6-0	185	McKinney North (Mckinney, TX)	USC
46.	Derrius Guice	RB	5-10.5	213	Catholic (Baton Rouge, LA)	LSU
WIDE RECEIVERS						
11.	Calvin Ridley	WR	6-0	170	Monarch (Pompano Beach, FL)	Alabama
18.	Deon Cain	WR	6-1.5	194	Tampa Bay Tech (Tampa, FL)	Clemson
19.	George Campbell	WR	6-3	184	East Lake (Tarpon Springs, FL)	Florida State
25.	Christian Kirk	WR	5-10	191	Saguaro (Scottsdale, AZ)	Texas A&M
27.	Tyron Johnson	WR	6-1	191	Warren Easton (New Orleans, LA)	LSU
TIGHT ENDS						
62.	Aliz'e Jones	TE	6-4.5	218	Bishop Gorman (Las Vegas, NV)	Notre Dame
85.	Chris Clark	TE	6-6	247	Avon Old Farms (Avon, CT)	UCLA
145	Hale Hentges	TE	6-6	230	Helias (Jefferson City, MO)	Alabama
187	Garrett Williams	TE	6-4	220	The First Academy (Orlando, FL)	Clemson
191	Jackson Harris	TE	6-6	250	Columbia Central (Columbia, TN)	Georgia
OFFENSIVE LINE						
2.	Martez Ivey	OT	6-5.5	275	Apopka (Apopka, FL)	Florida
22.	Mitch Hyatt	OT	6-5	272	North Gwinnett (Suwanee, GA)	Clemson
26.	Chuma Edoga	OG	6-3	280	McEachern (Powder Springs, GA)	USC
37.	Maea Teuhema	OG	6-4.5	340	Keller (Keller, TX)	LSU
52.	Javon Patterson	OG	6-2.5	317	Petal (Petal, MS)	Ole Miss
DEFENSIVE TACKLE						
1.	Trent Thompson	DT	6-2.5	313	Westover (Albany, GA)	Georgia
6.	Kahlil McKenzie	DT	6-3	354	Clayton Valley (Concord, CA)	Tennessee
13.	Terry Beckner Jr.	DT	6-4	293	East St. Louis (East Saint Louis, IL)	Missouri
14.	Daylon Mack	DT	6-1	330	Gladewater (Gladewater, TX)	Texas A&M
23.	Rasheem Green	DT	6-5	275	Junipero Serra (Gardena, CA)	USC
DEFENSIVE END						
3.	Byron Cowart	SDE	6-4	250	Armwood (Seffner, FL)	Auburn
7.	CeCe Jefferson	SDE	6-2	275	Baker County Senior (Glen Saint Mary, FL)	Florida
9.	Josh Sweat	WDE	6-5	240	Oscar Smith (Chesapeake, VA)	Florida State
16.	Canton Kaumatule	SDE	6-7	290	Punahou (Honolulu, HI)	Oregon
17.	Keisean Lucier-South	WDE	6-4	208	Lutheran - Orange County (Orange, CA)	UCLA
LINEBACKERS						
10.	Malik Jefferson	OLB	6-2.5	215	Poteet (Mesquite, TX)	Texas
34.	Justin Hilliard	OLB	6-0	225	St. Xavier (Cincinnati, OH)	Ohio State
35.	Osa Masina	OLB	6-3.5	230	Brighton (Salt Lake City, UT)	USC
41.	Porter Gustin	OLB	6-5	245	Salem Hills (Salem, UT)	USC
47.	Roquan Smith	OLB	6-2	207	Macon County (Montezuma, GA)	Georgia
DEFENSIVE BACKS						
4.	Iman Marshall	CB	6-1	190	Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, CA)	USC
5.	Derwin James	S	6-2	201	Haines City Senior (Haines City, FL)	Florida State
8.	Kevin Toliver II	CB	6-2	185	Trinity Christian Academy (Jacksonville, FL)	LSU
15.	Tarvarus McFadden	CB	6-2	198	American Heritage (Fort Lauderdale, FL)	Florida State
20.	Kendall Sheffield	CB	6-0	181	Fort Bend Marshall (Missouri City, TX)	Alabama
ATHLETE						
28.	Terry Godwin	ATH	6-0	168	Callaway (Hogansville, GA)	Georgia
42.	Kerryon Johnson	ATH	6-0	200	Madison Academy (Madison, AL)	Auburn
56.	Donte Jackson	ATH	5-11	164	Riverdale (New Orleans, LA)	LSU
61.	Jerome Baker	ATH	6-2	203	Benedictine (Cleveland, OH)	Ohio State
74.	Brian Cole	ATH	6-2	190	Heritage (Saginaw, MI)	Michigan

TOP 5 SCHOOLS
BY POSITION

Name, Ht, Wt, High School/Hometown

QUARTERBACK

1. Florida State
- Deondre Francois, 6-1/195, Bradenton (Fla.) IMG Academy
- De'Andre Johnson, 6-0/175, Jacksonville (Fla.) First Coast

2. Tennessee
- Jauan Jennings, 6-4/188, Murfreesboro (Tenn.) Blackman
- Quinten Dormady, 6-4/200, Boerne (Texas) High
- Sheriron Jones, 6-2.5/191, Moreno Valley (Calif.) Rancho Verde

3. Baylor
- Jarrett Stidham, 6-4/195, Stephenville (Texas) High

4. UCLA
- Josh Rosen, 6-4/205, Bellflower (Calif.) St. John Bosco

5. USC
- Ricky Town, 6-3/206, Ventura (Calif.) St. Bonaventure
- Sam Darnold, 6-4/205, San Clemente (Calif.) High

RUNNING BACK

1. LSU
- Derrius Guice, 5-10.5/213, Baton Rouge (La.) Catholic
- Nick Brossette, 6-0/207, Baton Rouge (La.) University Lab
- David Ducre (FB), 5-11/238, Mandeville (La.) Lakeshore

2. Auburn
- Jovon Robinson, 5-11/225, Milledgeville (Ga.) Georgia Military
- Javarius Davis, 5-9.5/173, Fairburn (Ga.) Langston Hughes
- Chandler Cox (FB), 6-2/225, Apopka (Fla.) High

3. N.C. State
- Johnny Frasier, 5-10/229, Princeton (N.C.) High
- Hyheim Hines, 5-9/187, Garner (N.C.) High
- Reggie Gallaspy, 5-11/205, Greensboro (N.C.) Southern Guilford

4. Alabama
- Damien Harris, 5-11/205, Berea (Ky.) Madison Southern
- Desherrius Flowers, 6-0.5/204, Mobile (Ala.) Vigor

5. Penn State
- Saquon Barkley, 5-11/190, Whitehall (Pa.) High
- Andre Robinson, 5-9/205, Harrisburg (Pa.) Bishop McDevitt

WIDE RECEIVER

1. Florida State
- George Campbell, 6-3/184, Tarpon Springs (Fla.) East Lake
- Da'Vante Phillips, 6-2/204, Miami (Fla.) Central
- Auden Tate, 6-4.5/215, Tampa (Fla.) Wharton
- Nyqwan Murray, 5-10.5/163, Orlando (Fla.) Oak Ridge

2. Notre Dame
- Equanimeous St. Brown, 6-5/205, Anaheim (Calif.) Servite
- Miles Boykin, 6-4/220, New Lenox (Ill.) Providence Catholic
- C.J. Sanders, 5-9/177, Sherman Oaks (Calif.) Notre Dame
- Jalen Guyton, 6-1/190, Allen (Texas) High

3. Ole Miss
Damarkus Lodge, 6-2.5/190, Cedar Hill (Texas) High
Van Jefferson, 6-2/183, Brentwood (Tenn.) Ravenwood

4. LSU
Tyron Johnson, 6-1/191, New Orleans (La.) Warren East
Derrick Dillon, 5-11/173, Franklinton (La.) Pine
Jazz Ferguson, 6-5/205, Saint Francisville (La.) West Feliciana
Brandon Martin, 6-4.5/200, Dallas (Texas) Prime Prep Academy

5. Alabama
Calvin Ridley, 6-0/170, Pompano Beach (Fla.) Monarch
Daylon Charlot, 6-0/193, Patterson (La.) High

TIGHT END

1. Arkansas
C.J. O'Grady, 6-4/230, Fayetteville (Ark.) High
Will Gragg, 6-4/245, Dumas (Ark.) High
Austin Cantrell, 6-4/249, Roland (Ark.) High

2. Wisconsin
Kyle Penniston, 6-5/232, Santa Ana (Calif.) Mater Dei
David Edwards, 6-7/245, Downers Grove (Ill.) North

3. Notre Dame
Aliz'e Jones, 6-4.5/218, Las Vegas (Nev.) Bishop Gorman

4. UCLA
Chris Clark, 6-6/247, Avon (Conn.) Old Farms

5. Alabama
Hale Hentges, 6-5/230, Jefferson City (Mo.) Helias

OFFENSIVE LINE

1. UCLA
Josh Wariboko, 6-3.5/315, Oklahoma City (Okla.) Casady School
Fred Ulu-Perry, 6-2/300, Honolulu (Hawaii) St. Louis
Andre James, 6-5/275, Herriman (Utah) High
Tevita Halalilo, 6-4/315, Moreno Valley (Calif.) Rancho Verde
Zach Bateman, 6-7/320, Costa Mesa (Calif.) Orange Coast

2. LSU
Maea Teuhema, 6-4.5/340, Keller (Texas) High
Chidi Valentine-Okeke, 6-6/305, Ludowici (Ga.) Faith Baptist Christian Acad.
Toby Weathersby, 6-4.5/295, Houston (Texas) Westfield
Adrian Magee, 6-5/315, Franklinton (La.) High
George Brown Jr., 6-6/253, Cincinnati (Ohio) Winton Woods

3. Alabama
Lester Cotton, 6-4/325, Tuscaloosa (Ala.) Central
Richie Petitbon, 6-4/301, Washington (D.C.) Gonzaga
Dallas Warmack, 6-1.5/306, Atlanta (Ga.) Mays
Brandon Kennedy, 6-2.5/295, Wetumpka (Ala.) High
Matt Warmack, 6-7/320, Senatobia (Miss.) Magnolia Heights

4. Tennessee
Drew Richmond, 6-5/310, Memphis (Tenn.) University School
Jack Jones, 6-5/290, Murfreesboro (Tenn.) Oakland
Venzell Boulware, 6-4/290, Fairburn (Ga.) Creekside
Zach Stewart, 6-4/295, Coalfield (Tenn.) High
Chance Hall, 6-5/305, Roanoke (Va.) Northside
Riley Lovingood (LS), 6-1/240, Hendersonville (Tenn.) Beech

5. Ohio State
Isaiah Prince, 6-6/272, Greenbelt (Md.) Eleanor Roosevelt
Matthew Burrell, 6-4/321, Woodbridge (Va.) C.D. Hylton
Grant Schmidt, 6-6/275, Sioux Falls (S.D.) Roosevelt
Kevin Feder, 6-9/305, Ramsey (N.J.) Don Bosco Prep
Brandon Bowen, 6-7/330, Draper (Utah) Corner Canyon
Mirko Jurkovic, 6-5/275, Bradenton (Fla.) IMG Academy
Liam McCullough (LS), 6-2/213, Columbus (Ohio) Worthington Kilbourne

DEFENSIVE LINE

1. Tennessee
Kahlil McKenzie, 6-3/354, Concord (Calif.) Clayton Valley
Kyle Phillips, 6-3.5/250, Nashville (Tenn.) Hillsboro
Shy Tuttle, 6-3/320, Lexington (N.C.) North Davidson
Andrew Butcher, 6-2/242, Alpharetta (Ga.) High
Darrell Taylor, 6-4/230, Hopewell (Va.) High
Quay Picou, 6-2/271, Buford (Ga.) High

2. Clemson
Albert Huggins, 6-3/283, Orangeburg (S.C.) Wilkinson
Christian Wilkins, 6-4/290, Suffield (Conn.) Suffield Academy
Clelin Ferrell, 6-5/225, Richmond (Va.) Benedictine
Austin Bryant, 6-5/250, Thomasville (Ga.) Thomas County Central
Sterling Johnson, 6-5/281, Clayton (N.C.) Cleveland
Gage Cervenka, 6-1/275, Greenwood (S.C.) Emerald
LaSamuel Davis, 6-3/194, Bamberg (S.C.) Ehrhardt

3. Georgia
Trent Thompson, 6-2.5/313, Albany (Ga.) Westover
Jonathan Ledbetter, 6-4/265, Tucker (Ga.) High
Natrez Patrick, 6-3/259, Atlanta (Ga.) Mays
D'Andre Walker, 6-2.5/209, Fairburn (Ga.) Langston Hughes
Chauncey Rivers, 6-2.5/247, Stone Mountain (Ga.) Stevenson
Michael Barnett, 6-5/258, Dorchester (S.C.) Woodland
DaQuan Hawkins, 6-4/285, Atlanta (Ga.) Westlake
Justin Young, 6-3.5/255, Loganville (Ga.) Grayson

4. Alabama
Daron Payne, 6-2/325, Birmingham (Ala.) Shades Valley
Mekhi Brown, 6-4.5/222, Columbus (Ga.) Carver
Anfernee Jennings, 6-3/256, Dadeville (Ala.) High
Christian Bell, 6-4/220, Birmingham (Ala.) Hoover

5. USC
Rasheem Green, 6-5/275, Gardena (Calif.) Junipero Serra
Jacob Daniel, 6-4/310, Clovis (Calif.) North
Noah Jefferson, 6-5/271, Las Vegas (Nev.) Desert Oasis
Christian Rector, 6-3.5/255, Los Angeles (Calif.) Loyola

LINEBACKER

1. USC
Osa Masina, 6-3.5/230, Salt Lake City (Utah) Brighton
Porter Gustin, 6-5/245, Salem (Utah) Salem Hills
John Houston, 6-3/211, Gardena (Calif.) Junipero Serra
Cameron Smith, 6-3/225, Granite Bay (Calif.) High

2. Texas
Malik Jefferson, 6-2.5/215, Mesquite (Texas) Poteet
Anthony Wheeler, 6-2/225, Dallas (Texas) Skyline
Cameron Townsend, 6-0.5/195, Missouri City (Texas) Ridge Point
Cecil Cherry, 6-0/230, Lakeland (Fla.) Victory Christian Academy

3. Auburn
Jeffery Holland, 6-2/230, Jacksonville (Fla.) Trinity Christian Acad.
Darrell Williams, 6-3/226, Birmingham (Ala.) Hoover
Richard McBryde, 6-2/210, Troy (Ala.) Charles Henderson School
Montavious Atkinson, 6-1/200, Fairburn (Ga.) Langston Hughes

4. Notre Dame
Josh Barajas, 6-3/215, Merrillville (Ind.) Andrean
Asmar Bilal, 6-2/205, Indianapolis (Ind.) Ben Davis
Tevon Coney, 6-1/222, Palm Beach Gardens (Fla.) High
Bo Wallace, 6-5/213, New Orleans (La.) John Curtis

5. Ohio State
Justin Hilliard, 6-0/225, Cincinnati (Ohio) St. Xavier
Nick Conner, 6-3/225, Dublin (Ohio) Scioto

DEFENSIVE BACK

1. Alabama
Kendall Sheffield, 6-0/181, Missouri City (Texas) Fort Bend Marshall
Minkah Fitzpatrick, 6-1/198, Jersey City (N.J.) St. Peters Prep
Dionte Thompson, 6-2/181, Orange (Texas) West Orange-Stark
Ronnie Harrison, 6-3/205, Tallahassee (Fla.) Florida State Univ. School

2. Florida State
Derwin James, 6-2/201, Haines City (Fla.) High
Tarvarus McFadden, 6-2/198, Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) Amer. Heritage
Calvin Brewton, 5-11.5/172, Miami (Fla.) Central
A.J. Westbrook, 6-0/173, Daytona Beach (Fla.) Mainland

3. LSU
Kevin Toliver II, 6-2/185, Jacksonville (Fla.) Trinity Christian Acad.
Xavier Lewis, 5-11/188, Reserve (La.) East St. John
Jeremy Cutrer, 6-2/170, Perkinston (Miss.) Mississippi Gulf Coast

4. Texas
Holton Hill, 6-2/184, Houston (Texas) Lamar
Kris Boyd, 5-11.5/185, Gilmer (Texas) High
DeShon Elliott, 6-1/200, Rockwall (Texas) Heath
Davante Davis, 6-3/200, Miami (Fla.) Booker T. Washington
P.J. Locke, 5-10/189, Beaumont (Texas) Central

5. USC
Iman Marshall, 6-1/190, Long Beach (Calif.) Poly
Marvell Tell, 6-1.5/188, Encino (Calif.) Crespi
Ykili Ross, 6-0.5/175, Riverside (Calif.) Polytechnic
Isaiah Langley, 5-11.5/161, Pleasanton (Calif.) Foothill

ATHLETE

1. Ohio State
Jerome Baker, 6-2/203, Cleveland (Ohio) Benedictine
Torrance Gibson, 6-4/204, Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) American Heritage

2. Auburn
Kerryon Johnson, 6-0/200, Madison (Ala.) Madison Academy
Jason Smith, 6-1/185, Perkinston (Miss.) Mississippi Gulf Coast C.C.
Tim Irvin, 5-8.5/194, Miami (Fla.) Westminster Christian School

3. Arizona State
Stanley Norman, 6-0/180, Gardena (Calif.) Junipero Serra
Jaason Lewis, 6-2/247, Virginia Beach (Va.) Ocean Lakes
Jay Jay Wilson, 6-3/228, Valencia (Calif.) High
Morie Evans, 5-10/175, Huntsville (Texas) High

4. South Carolina
Jalen Christian, 5-10/165, Damascus (Md.) High
Octavis Johnson, 6-1/181, Homerville (Ga.) Clinch County

5. Texas
DeAndre McNeal, 6-2/228, Mesquite (Texas) Poteet
Kai Locksley, 6-3/188, Baltimore (Md.) Gilman
Kirk Johnson, 6-0/205, San Jose (Calif.) Valley Christian

Wrangler

NATIONAL SCHEDULES

AAC

CENTRAL FLORIDA (UCF)

Sept. 3 FIU
Sept. 12 at Stanford
Sept. 19 FURMAN
Sept. 26 at South Carolina
Oct. 3 at Tulane
Oct. 10 CONNECTICUT
Oct. 17 at Temple
Oct. 24 HOUSTON
Oct. 31 at Cincinnati
Nov. 7 at Tulsa
Nov. 19 EAST CAROLINA
Nov. 27 SOUTH FLORIDA

CINCINNATI

Sept. 5 ALABAMA A&M
Sept. 12 TEMPLE
Sept. 19 at Miami (OH)
Sept. 24 at Memphis
Oct. 1 MIAMI
Oct. 17 at BYU
Oct. 24 CONNECTICUT
Oct. 31 UCF
Nov. 7 at Houston
Nov. 14 TULSA
Nov. 20 at South Florida
Nov. 28 at East Carolina

CONNECTICUT

Sept. 3 VILLANOVA
Sept. 12 ARMY
Sept. 19 at Missouri
Sept. 26 NAVY
Oct. 2 at BYU
Oct. 10 at UCF
Oct. 17 SOUTH FLORIDA
Oct. 24 at Cincinnati
Oct. 30 EAST CAROLINA
Nov. 7 at Tulane
Nov. 21 HOUSTON
Nov. 28 at Temple

EAST CAROLINA

Sept. 5 TOWSON
Sept. 12 at Florida
Sept. 19 at Navy
Sept. 26 VIRGINIA TECH
Oct. 3 at SMU
Oct. 10 at BYU
Oct. 17 TULSA
Oct. 22 TEMPLE
Oct. 30 at Connecticut
Nov. 7 SOUTH FLORIDA
Nov. 19 at UCF
Nov. 28 CINCINNATI

HOUSTON

Sept. 5 TENNESSEE TECH
Sept. 12 at Louisville
Sept. 26 TEXAS STATE
Oct. 3 at Tulsa
Oct. 8 SMU
Oct. 16 at Tulane
Oct. 24 at UCF
Oct. 31 VANDERBILT
Nov. 7 CINCINNATI
Nov. 14 MEMPHIS
Nov. 21 at Connecticut
Nov. 27 NAVY

MEMPHIS

Sept. 5 MISSOURI STATE
Sept. 12 at Kansas
Sept. 19 at Bowling Green
Sept. 24 CINCINNATI
Oct. 2 at South Florida
Oct. 17 OLE MISS
Oct. 23 at Tulsa
Oct. 31 TULANE
Nov. 7 NAVY
Nov. 14 at Houston
Nov. 21 at Temple
Nov. 28 SMU

NAVY

Sept. 5 COLGATE
Sept. 19 EAST CAROLINA
Sept. 26 at Connecticut
Oct. 3 AIR FORCE
Oct. 10 at Notre Dame
Oct. 24 TULANE
Oct. 31 SOUTH FLORIDA
Nov. 7 at Memphis
Nov. 14 SMU
Nov. 21 at Tulsa
Nov. 27 at Houston
Dec 12 ARMY

SMU

Sept. 4 BAYLOR
Sept. 12 NORTH TEXAS
Sept. 19 at TCU
Sept. 26 JAMES MADISON
Oct. 3 EAST CAROLINA
Oct. 8 at Houston
Oct. 24 at South Florida
Oct. 31 TULSA
Nov. 6 TEMPLE
Nov. 14 at Navy
Nov. 21 TULANE
Nov. 28 at Memphis

SOUTH FLORIDA

Sept. 5 FLORIDA A&M
Sept. 12 at Florida State
Sept. 19 at Maryland
Oct. 2 MEMPHIS
Oct. 10 SYRACUSE
Oct. 17 at Connecticut
Oct. 24 SMU
Oct. 31 at Navy
Nov. 7 at East Carolina
Nov. 14 at Temple
Nov. 20 CINCINNATI
Nov. 27 at UCF

TEMPLE

Sept. 5 PENN STATE
Sept. 12 at Cincinnati
Sept. 19 at Massachusetts
Oct. 2 at Charlotte
Oct. 10 TULANE
Oct. 17 UCF
Oct. 22 at East Carolina
Oct. 31 NOTRE DAME
Nov. 6 at SMU
Nov. 14 SOUTH FLORIDA
Nov. 21 MEMPHIS
Nov. 28 CONNECTICUT

TULANE

Sept. 3 DUKE
Sept. 12 at Georgia Tech
Sept. 19 MAINE
Oct. 3 UCF
Oct. 10 at Temple
Oct. 16 HOUSTON
Oct. 24 at Navy
Oct. 31 at Memphis
Nov. 7 CONNECTICUT
Nov. 14 at Army
Nov. 21 at SMU
Nov. 28 TULSA

TULSA

Sept. 5 FAU
Sept. 12 at New Mexico
Sept. 19 at Oklahoma
Oct. 3 HOUSTON
Oct. 10 ULM
Oct. 17 at East Carolina
Oct. 23 MEMPHIS
Oct. 31 at SMU
Nov. 7 UCF
Nov. 14 at Cincinnati
Nov. 21 NAVY
Nov. 28 at Tulane

ACC

BOSTON COLLEGE

Sept. 5 MAINE
Sept. 12 HOWARD
Sept. 18 FLORIDA STATE
Sept. 26 NORTHERN ILLINOIS
Oct. 3 at Duke
Oct. 10 WAKE FOREST
Oct. 17 at Clemson
Oct. 24 at Louisville
Oct. 31 VIRGINIA TECH
Nov. 7 NC STATE
Nov. 21 vs. Notre Dame (Fenway Park)
Nov. 28 at Syracuse

CLEMSON

Sept. 5 WOFFORD
Sept. 12 APPALACHIAN STATE
Sept. 17 at Louisville
Oct. 3 NOTRE DAME
Oct. 10 GEORGIA TECH
Oct. 17 BOSTON COLLEGE
Oct. 24 at Miami
Oct. 31 at NC State
Nov. 7 FLORIDA STATE
Nov. 14 at Syracuse
Nov. 21 WAKE FOREST
Nov. 28 at South Carolina

DUKE

Sept. 3 at Tulane
Sept. 12 NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL
Sept. 19 NORTHWESTERN
Sept. 26 GEORGIA TECH
Oct. 3 BOSTON COLLEGE
Oct. 10 at Army
Oct. 24 at Virginia Tech
Oct. 31 MIAMI
Nov. 7 at North Carolina
Nov. 14 PITTSBURGH
Nov. 21 at Virginia
Nov. 28 at Wake Forest

FLORIDA STATE

Sept. 5 TEXAS STATE
Sept. 12 SOUTH FLORIDA
Sept. 18 at Boston College
Oct. 3 at Wake Forest
Oct. 10. MIAMI
Oct. 17 LOUISVILLE
Oct. 24 at Georgia Tech
Oct. 31 SYRACUSE
Nov. 7 at Clemson
Nov. 14 NC STATE
Nov. 21 CHATTANOOGA
Nov. 28 at Florida

GEORGIA TECH

Sept. 3 ALCORN STATE
Sept. 12 TULANE
Sept. 19 at Notre Dame
Sept. 26 at Duke
Oct. 3 NORTH CAROLINA
Oct. 10 at Clemson
Oct. 17 PITTSBURGH
Oct. 24 FLORIDA STATE
Oct. 31 at Virginia
Nov. 12 VIRGINIA TECH
Nov. 21 at Miami
Nov. 28 at Georgia

LOUISVILLE

Sept. 5 vs. Auburn (Atlanta, GA)
Sept. 12 HOUSTON
Sept. 17 CLEMSON
Sept. 26 SAMFORD
Oct. 3 at NC State
Oct. 17 at Florida State
Oct. 24 BOSTON COLLEGE
Oct. 30 at Wake Forest
Nov. 7 SYRACUSE
Nov. 14 VIRGINIA
Nov. 21 at Pittsburgh
Nov. 28 at Kentucky

MIAMI

Sept. 5 BETHUNE-COOKMAN
Sept. 11 at FAU
Sept. 19 NEBRASKA
Oct. 1 at Cincinnati
Oct. 10 at Florida State
Oct. 17 VIRGINIA TECH
Oct. 24 CLEMSON
Oct. 31 at Duke
Nov. 7 VIRGINIA
Nov. 14 at North Carolina
Nov. 21 GEORGIA TECH
Nov. 27 at Pittsburgh

NORTH CAROLINA

Sept. 3 at South Carolina
Sept. 12 NORTH CAROLINA A&T
Sept. 19 ILLINOIS
Sept. 26 DELAWARE
Oct. 3 at Georgia Tech
Oct. 17 WAKE FOREST
Oct. 24 VIRGINIA
Oct. 29 at Pittsburgh
Nov. 7 DUKE
Nov. 14 MIAMI
Nov. 21 at Virginia Tech
Nov. 28 at NC State

NC STATE

Sept. 5 TROY
Sept. 12 EASTERN KENTUCKY
Sept. 19 at Old Dominion
Sept. 26 at South Alabama
Oct. 3 LOUISVILLE
Oct. 9 at Virginia Tech
Oct. 24 at Wake Forest
Oct. 31 CLEMSON
Nov. 7 at Boston College
Nov. 14 at Florida State
Nov. 21 SYRACUSE
Nov. 28 NORTH CAROLINA

PITTSBURGH

Sept. 5 YOUNGSTOWN STATE
Sept. 12 at Akron
Sept. 19 at Iowa
Oct. 3 at Virginia Tech
Oct. 10 VIRGINIA
Oct. 17 at Georgia Tech
Oct. 24 at Syracuse
Oct. 29 NORTH CAROLINA
Nov. 7 NOTRE DAME
Nov. 14 at Duke
Nov. 21 LOUISVILLE
Nov. 27 MIAMI

SYRACUSE

Sept. 5 RHODE ISLAND
Sept. 12 WAKE FOREST
Sept. 19 CENTRAL MICHIGAN
Sept. 26 LSU
Oct. 10 at South Florida
Oct. 17 at Virginia
Oct. 24 PITTSBURGH
Oct. 31 at Florida State
Nov. 7 at Louisville
Nov. 14 CLEMSON
Nov. 21 at NC State
Nov. 28 BOSTON COLLEGE

VIRGINIA

Sept. 5 at UCLA
Sept. 12 NOTRE DAME
Sept. 19 WILLIAM & MARY
Sept. 25 BOISE STATE
Oct. 10 at Pittsburgh
Oct. 17 SYRACUSE
Oct. 24 at North Carolina
Oct. 31 GEORGIA TECH
Nov. 7 at Miami
Nov. 14 at Louisville
Nov. 21 DUKE
Nov. 28 VIRGINIA TECH

VIRGINIA TECH

Sept. 7 OHIO STATE
Sept. 12 FURMAN
Sept. 19 at Purdue
Sept. 26 at East Carolina
Oct. 3 PITTSBURGH
Oct. 9 NC STATE
Oct. 17 at Miami
Oct. 24 DUKE
Oct. 31 at Boston College
Nov. 12 at Georgia Tech
Nov. 21 NORTH CAROLINA
Nov. 28 at Virginia

WAKE FOREST

Sept. 3 ELON
Sept. 12 at Syracuse
Sept. 19 at Army
Sept. 26 INDIANA
Oct. 3 FLORIDA STATE
Oct. 10 at Boston College
Oct. 17 at North Carolina
Oct. 24 NC STATE
Oct. 30 LOUISVILLE
Nov. 14 at Notre Dame
Nov. 21 at Clemson
Nov. 28 DUKE

BIG TEN

ILLINOIS

Sept. 4 KENT STATE
Sept. 12 WESTERN ILLINOIS
Sept. 19 at North Carolina
Sept. 26 MIDDLE TENNESSEE
Oct. 3 NEBRASKA
Oct. 10 at Iowa
Oct. 24 WISCONSIN
Oct. 31 at Penn State
Nov. 7 at Purdue
Nov. 14 OHIO STATE
Nov. 21 at Minnesota
Nov. 28 vs. Northwestern (Chicago, IL)

INDIANA

Sept. 5 SOUTHERN ILLINOIS
Sept. 12 FIU
Sept. 19 WESTERN KENTUCKY
Sept. 26 at Wake Forest
Oct. 3 OHIO STATE
Oct. 10 at Penn State
Oct. 17 RUTGERS
Oct. 24 at Michigan State
Nov. 7 IOWA
Nov. 14 MICHIGAN
Nov. 21 at Maryland
Nov. 28 at Purdue

IOWA

Sept. 5 ILLINOIS STATE
Sept. 12 at Iowa State
Sept. 19 PITTSBURGH
Sept. 26 NORTH TEXAS
Oct. 3 at Wisconsin
Oct. 10 ILLINOIS
Oct. 17 at Northwestern.
Oct. 31 MARYLAND
Nov. 7 at Indiana
Nov. 14 MINNESOTA
Nov. 21 PURDUE
Nov. 27 at Nebraska

MARYLAND

Sept. 5 RICHMOND
Sept. 12 BOWLING GREEN
Sept. 19 SOUTH FLORIDA
Sept. 26 at West Virginia
Oct. 3 MICHIGAN
Oct. 10 at Ohio State
Oct. 24 vs. Penn State (Baltimore, MD)
Oct. 31 at Iowa
Nov. 7 WISCONSIN
Nov. 14 at Michigan State
Nov. 21 INDIANA
Nov. 28 at Rutgers

MICHIGAN

Sept. 3 at Utah
Sept. 12 OREGON STATE
Sept. 19 UNLV
Sept. 26 BYU
Oct. 3 at Maryland
Oct. 10 NORTHWESTERN
Oct. 17 MICHIGAN STATE
Oct. 31 at Minnesota
Nov. 7 RUTGERS
Nov. 14 at Indiana
Nov. 21 at Penn State
Nov. 28 OHIO STATE

MICHIGAN STATE

Sept. 4 at Western Michigan
Sept. 12 OREGON
Sept. 19 AIR FORCE
Sept. 26 CENTRAL MICHIGAN
Oct. 3 PURDUE
Oct. 10 at Rutgers
Oct. 17 at Michigan
Oct. 24 INDIANA
Nov. 7 at Nebraska
Nov. 14 MARYLAND
Nov. 21 at Ohio State
Nov. 28 PENN STATE

MINNESOTA

Sept. 3 TCU
Sept. 12 at Colorado State
Sept. 19 KENT STATE
Sept. 26 OHIO
Oct. 3 at Northwestern
Oct. 10 at Purdue
Oct. 17 NEBRASKA
Oct. 31 MICHIGAN
Nov. 7 at Ohio State
Nov. 14 at Iowa
Nov. 21 ILLINOIS
Nov. 28 WISCONSIN

NEBRASKA

Sept. 5 BYU
Sept. 12 SOUTH ALABAMA
Sept. 19 at Miami
Sept. 26 SOUTHERN MISS
Oct. 3 at Illinois
Oct. 10 WISCONSIN
Oct. 17 at Minnesota
Oct. 24 NORTHWESTERN
Oct. 31 at Purdue
Nov. 7 MICHIGAN STATE
Nov. 14 at Rutgers
Nov. 27 IOWA

NORTHWESTERN

Sept. 5 STANFORD
Sept. 12 EASTERN ILLINOIS
Sept. 19 at Duke
Sept. 26 BALL STATE
Oct. 3 MINNESOTA
Oct. 10 at Michigan
Oct. 17 IOWA
Oct. 24 at Nebraska
Nov. 7 PENN STATE
Nov. 14 PURDUE
Nov. 21 at Wisconsin
Nov. 28 vs. Illinois (Chicago, IL)

OHIO STATE

Sept. 7 at Virginia Tech
Sept. 12 HAWAII
Sept. 19 NORTHERN ILLINOIS
Sept. 26 WESTERN MICHIGAN
Oct. 3 at Indiana
Oct. 10 MARYLAND
Oct. 17 PENN STATE
Oct. 24 at Rutgers
Nov. 7 MINNESOTA
Nov. 14 at Illinois
Nov. 21 MICHIGAN STATE
Nov. 28 at Michigan

PENN STATE

Sept. 5 at Temple
Sept. 12 BUFFALO
Sept. 19 RUTGERS
Sept. 26 SAN DIEGO STATE
Oct. 3 ARMY
Oct. 10 INDIANA
Oct. 17 at Ohio State
Oct. 24 vs. Maryland (Baltimore, MD)
Oct. 31 ILLINOIS
Nov. 7 at Northwestern
Nov. 21 MICHIGAN
Nov. 28 at Michigan State

PURDUE

Sept. 6 at Marshall
Sept. 12 INDIANA STATE
Sept. 19 VIRGINIA TECH
Sept. 26 BOWLING GREEN
Oct. 3 at Michigan State
Oct. 10 MINNESOTA
Oct. 17 at Wisconsin
Oct. 31 NEBRASKA
Nov. 7 ILLINOIS
Nov. 14 at Northwestern
Nov. 21 at Iowa
Nov. 28 INDIANA

RUTGERS

Sept. 5 NORFOLK STATE
Sept. 12 WASHINGTON STATE
Sept. 19 at Penn State
Sept. 26 KANSAS
Oct. 10 MICHIGAN STATE
Oct. 17 at Indiana
Oct. 24 OHIO STATE
Oct. 31 at Wisconsin
Nov. 7 at Michigan
Nov. 14 NEBRASKA
Nov. 21 at Army
Nov. 28 MARYLAND

WISCONSIN

Sept. 5 vs. Alabama (Dallas, TX)
Sept. 12 MIAMI (OH)
Sept. 19 TROY
Sept. 26 HAWAII
Oct. 3 IOWA
Oct. 10 at Nebraska
Oct. 17 PURDUE
Oct. 24 at Illinois
Oct. 31 RUTGERS
Nov. 7 at Maryland
Nov. 21 NORTHWESTERN
Nov. 28 at Minnesota

BIG 12

BAYLOR

Sept. 4 at SMU
Sept. 12 LAMAR
Sept. 26 RICE
Oct. 3 vs. Texas Tech (Arlington, TX)
Oct. 10 at Kansas
Oct. 17 WEST VIRGINIA
Oct. 24 IOWA STATE
Nov. 5 at Kansas State
Nov. 14 OKLAHOMA
Nov. 21 at Oklahoma State
Nov. 27 at TCU
Dec 5 TEXAS

IOWA STATE

Sept. 5 NORTHERN IOWA
Sept. 12 IOWA
Sept. 19 at Toledo
Oct. 3 KANSAS
Oct. 10 at Texas Tech
Oct. 17 TCU
Oct. 24 at Baylor
Oct. 31 TEXAS
Nov. 7 at Oklahoma
Nov. 14 OKLAHOMA STATE
Nov. 21 at Kansas State
Nov. 28 at West Virginia

KANSAS

Sept. 5 SOUTH DAKOTA STATE
Sept. 12 MEMPHIS
Sept. 26 at Rutgers

Wrangler

NATIONAL SCHEDULES

Oct. 3 at Iowa State
Oct. 10 BAYLOR
Oct. 17 TEXAS TECH
Oct. 24 at Oklahoma State
Oct. 31 OKLAHOMA
Nov. 7 at Texas
Nov. 14 at TCU
Nov. 21 WEST VIRGINIA
Nov. 28 KANSAS STATE

KANSAS STATE

Sept. 5 SOUTH DAKOTA
Sept. 12 at UTSA
Sept. 19 LOUISIANA TECH
Oct. 3 at Oklahoma State
Oct. 10 TCU
Oct. 17 OKLAHOMA
Oct. 24 at Texas
Nov. 5 BAYLOR
Nov. 14 at Texas Tech
Nov. 21 IOWA STATE
Nov. 28 at Kansas
Dec. 5 WEST VIRGINIA

OKLAHOMA

Sept. 5 AKRON
Sept. 12 at Tennessee
Sept. 19 TULSA
Oct. 3 WEST VIRGINIA
Oct. 10 vs. Texas (Dallas, TX)
Oct. 17 at Kansas State
Oct. 24 TEXAS TECH
Oct. 31 at Kansas
Nov. 7 IOWA STATE
Nov. 14 at Baylor
Nov. 21 TCU
Nov. 28 at Oklahoma State

OKLAHOMA STATE

Sept. 5 at Central Michigan
Sept. 12 CENTRAL ARKANSAS
Sept. 19 UTSA
Sept. 26 at Texas
Oct. 3 KANSAS STATE
Oct. 10 at West Virginia
Oct. 24 KANSAS
Oct. 31 at Texas Tech
Nov. 7 TCU
Nov. 14 at Iowa State
Nov. 21 BAYLOR
Nov. 28 OKLAHOMA

TCU

Sept. 3 at Minnesota
Sept. 12 STEPHEN F. AUSTIN
Sept. 19 SMU
Sept. 26 at Texas Tech
Oct. 3 TEXAS
Oct. 10 at Kansas State
Oct. 17 at Iowa State
Oct. 29 WEST VIRGINIA
Nov. 7 at Oklahoma State
Nov. 14 KANSAS
Nov. 21 at Oklahoma
Nov. 27 BAYLOR

TEXAS

Sept. 5 at Notre Dame
Sept. 12 RICE
Sept. 19 CALIFORNIA
Sept. 26 OKLAHOMA STATE
Oct. 3 at TCU
Oct. 10 vs. Oklahoma (Dallas, TX)
Oct. 24 KANSAS STATE
Oct. 31 at Iowa State
Nov. 7 KANSAS
Nov. 14 at West Virginia
Nov. 26 TEXAS TECH
Dec 5 at Baylor

TEXAS TECH

Sept. 5 SAM HOUSTON STATE
Sept. 12 UTEP
Sept. 19 at Arkansas
Sept. 26 TCU
Oct. 3 vs. Baylor (Arlington, TX)
Oct. 10 IOWA STATE
Oct. 17 at Kansas
Oct. 24 at Oklahoma
Oct. 31 OKLAHOMA STATE
Nov. 7 at West Virginia
Nov. 14 KANSAS STATE
Nov. 26 at Texas

WEST VIRGINIA

Sept. 5 GEORGIA SOUTHERN
Sept. 12 LIBERTY
Sept. 26 MARYLAND
Oct. 3 at Oklahoma
Oct. 10 OKLAHOMA STATE
Oct. 17 at Baylor
Oct. 29 at TCU
Nov. 7 TEXAS TECH
Nov. 14 TEXAS
Nov. 21 at Kansas
Nov. 28 IOWA STATE
Dec 5 at Kansas State

C-USA

CHARLOTTE

Sept. 4 at Georgia State
Sept. 12 PRESBYTERIAN
Sept. 19 at Middle Tennessee
Sept. 26 FAU
Oct. 2 TEMPLE
Oct. 17 at Old Dominion
Oct. 24 SOUTHERN MISS
Oct. 31 MARSHALL
Nov. 7 at FIU
Nov. 14 UTSA
Nov. 21 at Kentucky
Nov. 28 at Rice

FLORIDA ATLANTIC (FAU)

Sept. 5 at Tulsa
Sept. 11 MIAMI
Sept. 19 BUFFALO
Sept. 26 at Charlotte
Oct. 10 RICE
Oct. 17 MARSHALL
Oct. 24 at UTEP
Oct. 31 FIU
Nov. 7 at Western Kentucky
Nov. 14 MIDDLE TENNESSEE
Nov. 21 at Florida
Nov. 28 at Old Dominion

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL (FIU)

Sept. 3 at UCF
Sept. 12 at Indiana
Sept. 19 NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL
Sept. 26 at Louisiana Tech
Oct. 3 at Massachusetts
Oct. 10 UTEP
Oct. 17 at Middle Tennessee
Oct. 24 OLD DOMINION
Oct. 31 at FAU
Nov. 7 CHARLOTTE
Nov. 14 at Marshall
Nov. 21 WESTERN KENTUCKY

LOUISIANA TECH

Sept. 5 SOUTHERN
Sept. 10 at Western Kentucky
Sept. 19 at Kansas State
Sept. 26 FIU
Oct. 3 LOUISIANA
Oct. 10 at UTSA
Oct. 17 at Mississippi State
Oct. 24 MIDDLE TENNESSEE
Oct. 30 at Rice
Nov. 7 NORTH TEXAS
Nov. 21 at UTEP
Nov. 28 SOUTHERN MISS

MARSHALL

Sept. 6 PURDUE
Sept. 12 at Ohio
Sept. 19 NORFOLK STATE
Sept. 26 at Kent State
Oct. 3 OLD DOMINION
Oct. 9 SOUTHERN MISS
Oct. 17 at FAU
Oct. 24 NORTH TEXAS
Oct. 31 at Charlotte
Nov. 7 at Middle Tennessee
Nov. 14 FIU
Nov. 27 at Western Kentucky

MIDDLE TENNESSEE

Sept. 5 JACKSON STATE
Sept. 12 at Alabama
Sept. 19 CHARLOTTE
Sept. 26 at Illinois
Oct. 3 VANDERBILT
Oct. 10 at Western Kentucky
Oct. 17 FIU
Oct. 24 at Louisiana Tech
Nov. 7 MARSHALL
Nov. 14 at FAU
Nov. 21 NORTH TEXAS
Nov. 28 at UTSA

NORTH TEXAS

Sept. 12 at SMU
Sept. 19 RICE
Sept. 26 at Iowa
Oct. 3 at Southern Miss
Oct. 10 PORTLAND STATE
Oct. 15 WESTERN KENTUCKY
Oct. 24 at Marshall
Oct. 31 UTSA
Nov. 7 at Louisiana Tech
Nov. 14 at Tennessee
Nov. 21 at Middle Tennessee
Nov. 28 UTEP

OLD DOMINION

Sept. 5 at Eastern Michigan
Sept. 12 NORFOLK STATE
Sept. 19 NC STATE
Sept. 26 APPALACHIAN STATE
Oct. 3 at Marshall
Oct. 17 CHARLOTTE
Oct. 24 at FIU
Oct. 31 WESTERN KENTUCKY
Nov. 7 at UTSA
Nov. 14 UTEP
Nov. 21 at Southern Miss
Nov. 28 FAU

RICE

Sept. 5 WAGNER
Sept. 12 at Texas
Sept. 19 at North Texas
Sept. 26 at Baylor
Oct. 3 WESTERN KENTUCKY
Oct. 10 at FAU
Oct. 24 ARMY
Oct. 30 LOUISIANA TECH
Nov. 7 at UTEP
Nov. 14 SOUTHERN MISS
Nov. 21 at UTSA
Nov. 28 CHARLOTTE

SOUTHERN MISS

Sept. 5 MISSISSIPPI STATE
Sept. 12 AUSTIN PEAY
Sept. 19 at Texas State
Sept. 26 at Nebraska
Oct. 3 NORTH TEXAS
Oct. 9 at Marshall
Oct. 17 UTSA
Oct. 24 at Charlotte
Oct. 31 UTEP
Nov. 14 at Rice
Nov. 21 OLD DOMINION
Nov. 28 at Louisiana Tech

UTEP

Sept. 5 at Arkansas
Sept. 12 at Texas Tech
Sept. 19 at New Mexico State
Sept. 26 INCARNATE WORD
Oct. 3 UTSA
Oct. 10 at FIU
Oct. 24 FAU
Oct. 31 at Southern Miss
Nov. 7 RICE
Nov. 14 at Old Dominion
Nov. 21 LOUISIANA TECH
Nov. 28 at North Texas

UTSA

Sept. 3 at Arizona
Sept. 12 KANSAS STATE
Sept. 19 at Oklahoma State
Sept. 26 COLORADO STATE
Oct. 3 at UTEP
Oct. 10 LOUISIANA TECH
Oct. 17 at Southern Miss
Oct. 31 at North Texas
Nov. 7 OLD DOMINION
Nov. 14 at Charlotte
Nov. 21 RICE
Nov. 28 MIDDLE TENNESSEE

WESTERN KENTUCKY

Sept. 5 at Vanderbilt
Sept. 10 LOUISIANA TECH
Sept. 19 at Indiana
Sept. 26 MIAMI (OH)
Oct. 3 at Rice
Oct. 10 MIDDLE TENNESSEE
Oct. 15 at North Texas
Oct. 24 at LSU
Oct. 31 at Old Dominion
Nov. 7 FAU
Nov. 21 at FIU
Nov. 27 MARSHALL

I-A INDEPENDENTS

ARMY

Sept. 4 FORDHAM
Sept. 12 at Connecticut
Sept. 19 WAKE FOREST
Sept. 26 at Eastern Michigan
Oct. 3 at Penn State
Oct. 10 DUKE
Oct. 17 BUCKNELL
Oct. 24 at Rice
Nov. 7 at Air Force
Nov. 14 TULANE
Nov. 21 RUTGERS
Dec 12 at Navy

BYU

Sept. 5 at Nebraska
Sept. 12 BOISE STATE
Sept. 19 at UCLA
Sept. 26 at Michigan
Oct. 2 CONNECTICUT
Oct. 10 EAST CAROLINA
Oct. 17 CINCINNATI
Nov. 7 at San Jose State
Nov. 14 vs. Missouri (Kansas City, MO)
Nov. 21 FRESNO STATE
Nov. 28 at Utah State

NOTRE DAME

Sept. 5 TEXAS
Sept. 12 at Virginia
Sept. 19 GEORGIA TECH
Sept. 26 MASSACHUSETTS
Oct. 3 at Clemson
Oct. 10 NAVY
Oct. 17 USC
Oct. 31 at Temple
Nov. 7 at Pittsburgh
Nov. 14 WAKE FOREST
Nov. 21 at Boston College (Fenway Park)
Nov. 28 at Stanford

MAC

AKRON

Sept. 5 at Oklahoma
Sept. 12 PITTSBURGH
Sept. 19 SAVANNAH STATE
Sept. 26 at Louisiana
Oct. 3 OHIO
Oct. 10 at Eastern Michigan
Oct. 17 at Bowling Green
Oct. 31 CENTRAL MICHIGAN
Nov. 7 at Massachusetts
Nov. 14 at Miami (OH)
Nov. 21 BUFFALO
Nov. 27 KENT STATE

BALL STATE

Sept. 3 VMI
Sept. 12 at Texas A&M
Sept. 19 at Eastern Michigan
Sept. 26 at Northwestern
Oct. 3 TOLEDO
Oct. 10 at Northern Illinois
Oct. 17 GEORGIA STATE
Oct. 24 CENTRAL MICHIGAN
Oct. 31 MASSACHUSETTS
Nov. 5 at Western Michigan
Nov. 17 at Ohio
Nov. 24 BOWLING GREEN

BOWLING GREEN

Sept. 5 vs. Tennessee (Nashville, TN)
Sept. 12 at Maryland
Sept. 19 MEMPHIS
Sept. 26 at Purdue
Oct. 3 at Buffalo
Oct. 10 MASSACHUSETTS
Oct. 17 AKRON
Oct. 24 at Kent State
Nov. 4 OHIO
Nov. 11 at Western Michigan
Nov. 17 TOLEDO
Nov. 24 at Ball State

BUFFALO

Sept. 5 ALBANY
Sept. 12 at Penn State
Sept. 19 at FAU
Sept. 26 NEVADA
Oct. 3 BOWLING GREEN
Oct. 17 at Central Michigan
Oct. 24 OHIO
Oct. 29 at Miami (OH)
Nov. 5 at Kent State
Nov. 11 NORTHERN ILLINOIS
Nov. 21 at Akron
Nov. 27 MASSACHUSETTS

CENTRAL MICHIGAN

Sept. 5 OKLAHOMA STATE
Sept. 12 MONMOUTH (NJ)
Sept. 19 at Syracuse
Sept. 26 at Michigan State
Oct. 3 NORTHERN ILLINOIS
Oct. 10 at Western Michigan
Oct. 17 BUFFALO
Oct. 24 at Ball State
Oct. 31 at Akron
Nov. 10 TOLEDO
Nov. 18 at Kent State
Nov. 27 Eastern MICHIGAN

EASTERN MICHIGAN

Sept. 5 OLD DOMINION
Sept. 12 at Wyoming
Sept. 19 BALL STATE
Sept. 26 ARMY
Oct. 3 at LSU
Oct. 10 AKRON
Oct. 17 at Toledo
Oct. 24 at Northern Illinois
Oct. 29 W. MICHIGAN
Nov. 7 at Miami (OH)
Nov. 14 MASSACHUSETTS
Nov. 27 at Central Michigan

KENT STATE

Sept. 4 at Illinois
Sept. 12 DELAWARE STATE
Sept. 19 at Minnesota
Sept. 26 MARSHALL
Oct. 3 MIAMI (OH)
Oct. 10 at Toledo
Oct. 17 at Massachusetts
Oct. 24 BOWLING GREEN
Nov. 5 BUFFALO
Nov. 10 at Ohio
Nov. 18 CENTRAL MICHIGAN
Nov. 27 at Akron

MASSACHUSETTS

Sept. 12 at Colorado
Sept. 19 TEMPLE
Sept. 26 at Notre Dame
Oct. 3 FIU
Oct. 10 at Bowling Green
Oct. 17 KENT STATE
Oct. 24 TOLEDO
Oct. 31 at Ball State
Nov. 7 AKRON
Nov. 14 at Eastern Michigan
Nov. 21 MIAMI (OH)
Nov. 27 at Buffalo

MIAMI (OH)

Sept. 5 PRESBYTERIAN
Sept. 12 at Wisconsin
Sept. 19 CINCINNATI
Sept. 26 at Western Kentucky
Oct. 3 at Kent State
Oct. 10 at Ohio
Oct. 17 NORTHERN ILLINOIS
Oct. 24 at Western Michigan
Oct. 29 BUFFALO
Nov. 7 EASTERN MICHIGAN
Nov. 14 AKRON
Nov. 21 at Massachusetts

NORTHERN ILLINOIS

Sept. 5 UNLV
Sept. 12 MURRAY STATE
Sept. 19 at Ohio State
Sept. 26 at Boston College
Oct. 3 at Central Michigan
Oct. 10 BALL STATE
Oct. 17 at Miami (OH)
Oct. 24 EASTERN MICHIGAN
Nov. 3 at Toledo
Nov. 11 at Buffalo
Nov. 18 WESTERN MICHIGAN
Nov. 24 OHIO

OHIO

Sept. 3 at Idaho
Sept. 12 MARSHALL
Sept. 19 S.E. LOUISIANA
Sept. 26 at Minnesota
Oct. 3 at Akron
Oct. 10 MIAMI (OH)
Oct. 17 WESTERN MICHIGAN
Oct. 24 at Buffalo
Nov. 4 at Bowling Green
Nov. 10 KENT STATE
Nov. 17 BALL STATE
Nov. 24 at Northern Illinois

TOLEDO

Sept. 3 STONY BROOK
Sept. 12 at Arkansas
Sept. 19 IOWA STATE
Sept. 26 ARKANSAS STATE
Oct. 3 at Ball State
Oct. 10 KENT STATE
Oct. 17 EASTERN MICHIGAN
Oct. 24 at Massachusetts
Nov. 3 NORTHERN ILLINOIS
Nov. 10 at Central Michigan
Nov. 17 at Bowling Green
Nov. 27 WESTERN MICHIGAN

WESTERN MICHIGAN

Sept. 4 MICHIGAN STATE
Sept. 12 at Georgia Southern
Sept. 19 MURRAY STATE
Sept. 26 at Ohio State
Oct. 10 CENTRAL MICHIGAN
Oct. 17 at Ohio
Oct. 24 MIAMI (OH)
Oct. 29 at Eastern Michigan
Nov. 5 BALL STATE
Nov. 11 BOWLING GREEN
Nov. 18 at Northern Illinois
Nov. 27 at Toledo

MOUNTAIN WEST

AIR FORCE

Sept. 5 MORGAN STATE
Sept. 12 SAN JOSE STATE
Sept. 19 at Michigan State
Oct. 3 at Navy
Oct. 10 WYOMING
Oct. 17 at Colorado State
Oct. 24 FRESNO STATE
Oct. 31 at Hawaii
Nov. 7 ARMY
Nov. 14 UTAH STATE
Nov. 21 at Boise State
Nov. 28 at New Mexico

BOISE STATE

Sept. 4 WASHINGTON
Sept. 12 at BYU
Sept. 18 IDAHO STATE
Sept. 25 at Virginia
Oct. 3 HAWAII
Oct. 10 at Colorado State
Oct. 17 at Utah State
Oct. 24 WYOMING
Oct. 31 at UNLV
Nov. 14 NEW MEXICO
Nov. 21 AIR FORCE
Nov. 28 at San Jose State

COLORADO STATE

Sept. 5 SAVANNAH STATE
Sept. 12 MINNESOTA
Sept. 19 vs. Colorado (Denver, CO)
Sept. 26 at UTSA
Oct. 3 at Utah State
Oct. 10 BOISE STATE
Oct. 17 AIR FORCE
Oct. 31 SAN DIEGO STATE
Nov. 7 at Wyoming
Nov. 14 UNLV
Nov. 21 at New Mexico
Nov. 28 at Fresno State

FRESNO STATE

Sept. 5 ABILENE CHRISTIAN
Sept. 12 at Ole Miss
Sept. 19 UTAH
Sept. 26 at San Jose State
Oct. 3 at San Diego State
Oct. 10 UTAH STATE
Oct. 17 UNLV
Oct. 24 at Air Force
Nov. 7 NEVADA
Nov. 14 at Hawaii
Nov. 21 at BYU
Nov. 28 COLORADO STATE

HAWAII

Sept. 3 COLORADO
Sept. 12 at Ohio State
Sept. 19 UC DAVIS
Sept. 26 at Wisconsin
Oct. 3 at Boise State
Oct. 10 SAN DIEGO STATE
Oct. 17 at New Mexico
Oct. 24 at Nevada
Oct. 31 AIR FORCE
Nov. 7 at UNLV
Nov. 14 FRESNO STATE
Nov. 21 SAN JOSE STATE
Nov. 28 ULM

NEVADA

Sept. 3 UC DAVIS
Sept. 12 ARIZONA
Sept. 19 at Texas A&M
Sept. 26 at Buffalo
Oct. 3 UNLV
Oct. 10 NEW MEXICO
Oct. 17 at Wyoming
Oct. 24 HAWAII
Nov. 7 at Fresno State
Nov. 14 SAN JOSE STATE
Nov. 21 at Utah State
Nov. 28 at San Diego State

NEW MEXICO

Sept. 5 MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE
Sept. 12 TULSA
Sept. 18 at Arizona State

Wrangler

NATIONAL SCHEDULES

Sept. 26 at Wyoming
Oct. 3 NEW MEXICO STATE
Oct. 10 at Nevada
Oct. 17 HAWAII
Oct. 24 at San Jose State
Nov. 7 UTAH STATE
Nov. 14 at Boise State
Nov. 21 COLORADO STATE
Nov. 28 AIR FORCE

SAN DIEGO STATE

Sept. 5 SAN DIEGO
Sept. 12 at California
Sept. 19 SOUTH ALABAMA
Sept. 26 at Penn State
Oct. 3 FRESNO STATE
Oct. 10 at Hawaii
Oct. 17 at San Jose State
Oct. 24 UTAH STATE
Oct. 31 at Colorado State
Nov. 14 WYOMING
Nov. 21 at UNLV
Nov. 28 NEVADA

SAN JOSE STATE

Sept. 3 NEW HAMPSHIRE
Sept. 12 at Air Force
Sept. 19 at Oregon State
Sept. 26 FRESNO STATE
Oct. 3 at Auburn
Oct. 10 at UNLV
Oct. 17 SAN DIEGO STATE
Oct. 24 NEW MEXICO
Nov. 7 BYU
Nov. 14 at Nevada
Nov. 21 at Hawaii
Nov. 28 BOISE STATE

UNLV

Sept. 5 at Northern Illinois
Sept. 12 UCLA
Sept. 19 at Michigan
Sept. 26 IDAHO STATE
Oct. 3 at Nevada
Oct. 10 SAN JOSE STATE
Oct. 17 at Fresno State
Oct. 31 BOISE STATE
Nov. 7 HAWAII
Nov. 14 at Colorado State
Nov. 21 SAN DIEGO STATE
Nov. 28 at Wyoming

UTAH STATE

Sept. 3 SOUTHERN UTAH
Sept. 12 at Utah
Sept. 19 at Washington
Oct. 3 COLORADO STATE
Oct. 10 at Fresno State
Oct. 17 BOISE STATE
Oct. 24 at San Diego State
Oct. 31 WYOMING
Nov. 7 at New Mexico
Nov. 14 at Air Force
Nov. 21 NEVADA
Nov. 28 BYU

WYOMING

Sept. 5 NORTH DAKOTA
Sept. 12 EASTERN MICHIGAN
Sept. 19 at Washington State
Sept. 26 NEW MEXICO
Oct. 3 at Appalachian State
Oct. 10 at Air Force
Oct. 17 NEVADA
Oct. 24 at Boise State
Oct. 31 at Utah State
Nov. 7 COLORADO STATE
Nov. 14 at San Diego State
Nov. 28 UNLV

PAC-12

ARIZONA

Sept. 3 UTSA
Sept. 12 at Nevada
Sept. 19 NORTHERN ARIZONA
Sept. 26 UCLA
Oct. 3 at Stanford
Oct. 10 OREGON STATE
Oct. 17 at Colorado
Oct. 24 WASHINGTON STATE
Oct. 31 at Washington
Nov. 7 at USC
Nov. 14 UTAH
Nov. 21 at Arizona State

ARIZONA STATE

Sept. 5 vs. Texas A&M (Houston, TX)
Sept. 12 CAL POLY
Sept. 18 NEW MEXICO
Sept. 26 USC
Oct. 3 at UCLA
Oct. 10 COLORADO
Oct. 17 at Utah
Oct. 29 OREGON
Nov. 7 at Washington State
Nov. 14 WASHINGTON
Nov. 21 ARIZONA
Nov. 28 at California

CALIFORNIA

Sept. 5 GRAMBLING STATE
Sept. 12 SAN DIEGO STATE
Sept. 19 at Texas
Sept. 26 at Washington
Oct. 3 WASHINGTON STATE
Oct. 10 at Utah
Oct. 22 at UCLA
Oct. 31 USC
Nov. 7 at Oregon
Nov. 14 OREGON STATE
Nov. 21 at Stanford
Nov. 28 ARIZONA STATE

COLORADO

Sept. 4 at Hawaii
Sept. 12 MASSACHUSETTS
Sept. 19 vs. Colorado State (Denver, CO)
Sept. 26 NICHOLLS STATE
Oct. 3 OREGON
Oct. 10 at Arizona State
Oct. 17 ARIZONA
Oct. 24 at Oregon State
Oct. 31 at UCLA
Nov. 7 STANFORD
Nov. 13 USC
Nov. 21 at Washington State
Nov. 28 at Utah

OREGON

Sept. 5 EASTERN WASHINGTON
Sept. 12 at Michigan State
Sept. 19 GEORGIA STATE
Sept. 26 UTAH
Oct. 3 at Colorado
Oct. 10 WASHINGTON STATE
Oct. 17 at Washington
Oct. 29 at Arizona State
Nov. 7 CALIFORNIA
Nov. 14 at Stanford
Nov. 21 USC
Nov. 27 OREGON STATE

OREGON STATE

Sept. 4 WEBER STATE
Sept. 12 at Michigan
Sept. 19 SAN JOSE STATE
Sept. 25 STANFORD
Oct. 10 at Arizona
Oct. 17 at Washington State
Oct. 24 COLORADO
Oct. 31 at Utah
Nov. 7 UCLA
Nov. 14 at California
Nov. 21 WASHINGTON
Nov. 27 at Oregon

STANFORD

Sept. 5 at Northwestern
Sept. 12 UCF
Sept. 19 at USC
Sept. 25 at Oregon State
Oct. 3 ARIZONA
Oct. 15 UCLA
Oct. 24 WASHINGTON
Oct. 31 at Washington State
Nov. 7 at Colorado
Nov. 14 OREGON
Nov. 21 CALIFORNIA
Nov. 28 NOTRE DAME

UCLA

Sept. 5 VIRGINIA
Sept. 12 at UNLV
Sept. 19 BYU
Sept. 26 at Arizona
Oct. 3 ARIZONA STATE
Oct. 15 at Stanford
Oct. 22 CALIFORNIA
Oct. 31 COLORADO
Nov. 7 at Oregon State
Nov. 14 WASHINGTON STATE
Nov. 21 at Utah
Nov. 28 at USC

USC

Sept. 5 ARKANSAS STATE
Sept. 12 IDAHO
Sept. 19 STANFORD
Sept. 26 at Arizona State
Oct. 8 WASHINGTON
Oct. 17 at Notre Dame
Oct. 24 UTAH
Oct. 31 at California
Nov. 7 ARIZONA
Nov. 13 at Colorado
Nov. 21 at Oregon
Nov. 28 UCLA

UTAH

Sept. 3 MICHIGAN
Sept. 12 UTAH STATE
Sept. 19 at Fresno State
Sept. 26 at Oregon
Oct. 10 CALIFORNIA
Oct. 17 ARIZONA STATE
Oct. 24 at USC
Oct. 31 OREGON STATE
Nov. 7 at Washington
Nov. 14 at Arizona
Nov. 21 UCLA
Nov. 28 COLORADO

WASHINGTON

Sept. 4 at Boise State
Sept. 12 SACRAMENTO STATE
Sept. 19 UTAH STATE
Sept. 26 CALIFORNIA
Oct. 8 at USC
Oct. 17 OREGON
Oct. 24 at Stanford
Oct. 31 ARIZONA
Nov. 7 UTAH
Nov. 14 at Arizona State
Nov. 21 at Oregon State
Nov. 27 WASHINGTON STATE

WASHINGTON STATE

Sept. 5 PORTLAND STATE
Sept. 12 at Rutgers
Sept. 19 WYOMING
Oct. 3 at California
Oct. 10 at Oregon
Oct. 17 OREGON STATE
Oct. 24 at Arizona
Oct. 31 STANFORD
Nov. 7 ARIZONA STATE
Nov. 14 at UCLA
Nov. 21 COLORADO
Nov. 27 at Washington

SEC

ALABAMA

Sept. 5 vs. Wisconsin (Dallas, TX)
Sept. 12 MIDDLE TENNESSEE
Sept. 19 OLE MISS
Sept. 26 ULM
Oct. 3 at Georgia
Oct. 10 ARKANSAS
Oct. 17 at Texas A&M
Oct. 24 TENNESSEE
Nov. 7 LSU
Nov. 14 at Mississippi State
Nov. 21 CHARLESTON SOUTHERN
Nov. 28 at Auburn

ARKANSAS

Sept. 5 UTEP
Sept. 12 TOLEDO
Sept. 19 TEXAS TECH
Sept. 26 vs. TEXAS A&M (Arlington, TX)
Oct. 3 at Tennessee
Oct. 10 at Alabama
Oct. 24 AUBURN
Oct. 31 UT-MARTIN
Nov. 7 at Ole Miss
Nov. 14 at LSU
Nov. 21 MISSISSIPPI STATE
Nov. 28 MISSOURI

AUBURN

Sept. 5 vs. Louisville (Atlanta, GA)
Sept. 12 JACKSONVILLE STATE
Sept. 19 at LSU
Sept. 26 MISSISSIPPI STATE
Oct. 3 SAN JOSE STATE
Oct. 15 at Kentucky
Oct. 24 at Arkansas
Oct. 31 OLE MISS
Nov. 7 at Texas A&M
Nov. 14 GEORGIA
Nov. 21 IDAHO
Nov. 28 ALABAMA

FLORIDA

Sept. 5 NEW MEXICO STATE
Sept. 12 EAST CAROLINA
Sept. 19 at Kentucky
Sept. 26 TENNESSEE
Oct. 3 OLE MISS
Oct. 10 at Missouri
Oct. 17 at LSU
Oct. 31 vs. Georgia (Jacksonville, FL)
Nov. 7 VANDERBILT
Nov. 14 at South Carolina
Nov. 21 FAU
Nov. 28 FLORIDA STATE

GEORGIA

Sept. 5 ULM
Sept. 12 at Vanderbilt
Sept. 19 SOUTH CAROLINA
Sept. 26 SOUTHERN
Oct. 3 ALABAMA
Oct. 10 at Tennessee
Oct. 17 MISSOURI
Oct. 31 vs. Florida (Jacksonville, FL)
Nov. 7 KENTUCKY
Nov. 14 at Auburn
Nov. 21 GEORGIA SOUTHERN
Nov. 28 GEORGIA TECH

KENTUCKY

Sept. 5 LOUISIANA
Sept. 12 at South Carolina
Sept. 19 FLORIDA
Sept. 26 MISSOURI
Oct. 3 EASTERN KENTUCKY
Oct. 15 AUBURN
Oct. 24 at Mississippi State
Oct. 31 TENNESSEE
Nov. 7 at Georgia
Nov. 14 at Vanderbilt
Nov. 21 CHARLOTTE
Nov. 28 LOUISVILLE

LSU

Sept. 5 McNEESE STATE
Sept. 12 at Mississippi State
Sept. 19 AUBURN
Sept. 26 at Syracuse
Oct. 3 EASTERN MICHIGAN
Oct. 10 at South Carolina
Oct. 17 FLORIDA
Oct. 24 WESTERN KENTUCKY
Nov. 7 at Alabama
Nov. 14 ARKANSAS
Nov. 21 at Ole Miss
Nov. 28 TEXAS A&M

OLE MISS

Sept. 5 UT-MARTIN
Sept. 12 FRESNO STATE
Sept. 19 at Alabama
Sept. 26 VANDERBILT
Oct. 3 at Florida
Oct. 10 NEW MEXICO STATE
Oct. 17 at Memphis
Oct. 24 TEXAS A&M
Oct. 31 at Auburn
Nov. 7 ARKANSAS
Nov. 21 LSU
Nov. 28 at Mississippi State

MISSISSIPPI STATE

Sept. 5 at Southern Miss
Sept. 12 LSU
Sept. 19 NORTHWESTERN STATE
Sept. 26 at Auburn
Oct. 3 at Texas A&M
Oct. 10 TROY
Oct. 17 LOUISIANA TECH
Oct. 24 KENTUCKY
Nov. 5 at Missouri
Nov. 14 ALABAMA
Nov. 21 at Arkansas
Nov. 28 OLE MISS

MISSOURI

Sept. 5 SE MISSOURI STATE
Sept. 12 at Arkansas State
Sept. 19 CONNECTICUT
Sept. 26 at Kentucky
Oct. 3 SOUTH CAROLINA
Oct. 10 FLORIDA
Oct. 17 at Georgia
Oct. 24 at Vanderbilt
Nov. 5 MISSISSIPPI STATE
Nov. 14 vs. BYU (Kansas City, MO)
Nov. 21 TENNESSEE
Nov. 28 at Arkansas

SOUTH CAROLINA

Sept. 3 NORTH CAROLINA
Sept. 12 KENTUCKY
Sept. 19 at Georgia
Sept. 26 UCF
Oct. 3 at Missouri
Oct. 10 LSU
Oct. 17 VANDERBILT
Oct. 31 at Texas A&M
Nov. 7 at Tennessee
Nov. 14 FLORIDA
Nov. 21 THE CITADEL
Nov. 28 CLEMSON

TENNESSEE

Sept. 5 vs. Bowling Green (Nashville, TN)
Sept. 12 OKLAHOMA
Sept. 19 WESTERN CAROLINA
Sept. 26 at Florida
Oct. 3 ARKANSAS
Oct. 10 GEORGIA
Oct. 24 at Alabama
Oct. 31 at Kentucky
Nov. 7 SOUTH CAROLINA
Nov. 14 NORTH TEXAS
Nov. 21 at Missouri
Nov. 28 VANDERBILT

TEXAS A&M

Sept. 5 vs. Arizona State (Houston, TX)
Sept. 12 BALL STATE
Sept. 19 NEVADA
Sept. 26 vs. Arkansas (Arlington, TX)
Oct. 3 MISSISSIPPI STATE
Oct. 17 ALABAMA
Oct. 24 at Ole Miss
Oct. 31 SOUTH CAROLINA
Nov. 7 AUBURN
Nov. 14 WESTERN CAROLINA
Nov. 21 at Vanderbilt
Nov. 28 at LSU

VANDERBILT

Sept. 5 WESTERN KENTUCKY
Sept. 12 GEORGIA
Sept. 19 AUSTIN PEAY
Sept. 26 at Ole Miss
Oct. 3 at Middle Tennessee
Oct. 17 at South Carolina
Oct. 24 MISSOURI
Oct. 31 at Houston
Nov. 7 at Florida
Nov. 14 KENTUCKY
Nov. 21 TEXAS A&M
Nov. 28 at Tennessee

SUN BELT

APPALACHIAN STATE

Sept. 5 HOWARD
Sept. 12 at Clemson
Sept. 26 at Old Dominion
Oct. 3 WYOMING
Oct. 10 at Georgia State
Oct. 17 at ULM
Oct. 22 GEORGIA SOUTHERN
Oct. 31 TROY
Nov. 5 ARKANSAS STATE
Nov. 14 at Idaho
Nov. 28 LOUISIANA
Dec. 5 at South Alabama

ARKANSAS STATE

Sept. 5 at USC
Sept. 12 MISSOURI
Sept. 19 MISSOURI STATE
Sept. 26 at Toledo
Oct. 3 IDAHO
Oct. 13 at South Alabama
Oct. 20 LOUISIANA
Oct. 31 GEORGIA STATE
Nov. 5 at Appalachian State
Nov. 14 at ULM
Nov. 28 at New Mexico State
Dec. 5 TEXAS STATE

GEORGIA STATE

Sept. 4 CHARLOTTE
Sept. 12 at New Mexico State
Sept. 19 at Oregon
Oct. 3 LIBERTY
Oct. 10 APPALACHIAN STATE
Oct. 17 at Ball State
Oct. 31 at Arkansas State
Nov. 7 LOUISIANA
Nov. 14 at Texas State
Nov. 21 SOUTH ALABAMA
Nov. 27 TROY
Dec. 5 at Georgia Southern

GEORGIA SOUTHERN

Sept. 5 at West Virginia
Sept. 12 WESTERN MICHIGAN
Sept. 19 THE CITADEL
Sept. 26 at Idaho
Oct. 3 at ULM
Oct. 17 NEW MEXICO STATE
Oct. 22 at Appalachian State
Oct. 29 TEXAS STATE
Nov. 14 at Troy
Nov. 21 at Georgia
Nov. 28 SOUTH ALABAMA
Dec. 5 GEORGIA STATE

IDAHO

Sept. 3 OHIO
Sept. 12 at USC
Sept. 19 WOFFORD
Sept. 26 GEORGIA SOUTHERN
Oct. 3 at Arkansas State
Oct. 17 at Troy
Oct. 24 ULM
Oct. 31 at New Mexico State
Nov. 7 at South Alabama
Nov. 14 APPALACHIAN STATE
Nov. 21 at Auburn
Nov. 28 TEXAS STATE

LOUISIANA

Sept. 5 at Kentucky
Sept. 12 NORTHWESTERN STATE
Sept. 26 AKRON
Oct. 3 at Louisiana Tech
Oct. 10 TEXAS STATE
Oct. 20 at Arkansas State
Oct. 31 ULM
Nov. 7 at Georgia State
Nov. 12 at South Alabama
Nov. 21 NEW MEXICO STATE
Nov. 28 at Appalachian State
Dec. 5 TROY

LOUISIANA-MONROE (ULM)

Sept. 5 at Georgia
Sept. 12 NICHOLLS STATE
Sept. 26 at Alabama
Oct. 3 GEORGIA SOUTHERN
Oct. 10 at Tulsa
Oct. 17 APPALACHIAN STATE
Oct. 24 at Idaho
Oct. 31 at Louisiana
Nov. 7 at Troy
Nov. 14 ARKANSAS STATE
Nov. 19 at Texas State
Nov. 28 at Hawaii
Dec. 5 NEW MEXICO STATE

NEW MEXICO STATE

Sept. 5 at Florida
Sept. 12 GEORGIA STATE
Sept. 19 UTEP
Oct. 3 at New Mexico
Oct. 10 at Ole Miss
Oct. 17 at Georgia Southern
Oct. 24 TROY
Oct. 31 IDAHO
Nov. 7 at Texas State
Nov. 21 at Louisiana
Nov. 28 ARKANSAS STATE
Dec. 5 at ULM

SOUTH ALABAMA

Sept. 5 GARDNER-WEBB
Sept. 12 at Nebraska
Sept. 19 at San Diego State
Sept. 26 NC STATE
Oct. 3 at Troy
Oct. 13 ARKANSAS STATE
Oct. 24 at Texas State
Nov. 7 IDAHO
Nov. 12 LOUISIANA
Nov. 21 at Georgia State
Nov. 28 at Georgia Southern
Dec. 5 APPALACHIAN STATE

TEXAS STATE

Sept. 5 at Florida State
Sept. 12 PRAIRIE VIEW A&M
Sept. 19 SOUTHERN MISS
Sept. 26 at Houston
Oct. 10 at Louisiana
Oct. 24 SOUTH ALABAMA
Oct. 29 at Georgia Southern
Nov. 7 NEW MEXICO STATE
Nov. 14 GEORGIA STATE
Nov. 19 ULM
Nov. 28 at Idaho
Dec. 5 at Arkansas State

TROY

Sept. 5 at NC State
Sept. 12 CHARLESTON SOUTHERN
Sept. 19 at Wisconsin
Oct. 3 SOUTH ALABAMA
Oct. 10 at Mississippi State
Oct. 17 IDAHO
Oct. 24 at New Mexico State
Oct. 31 at Appalachian State
Nov. 7 ULM
Nov. 14 GEORGIA SOUTHERN
Nov. 27 at Georgia State
Dec. 5 at Louisiana

ACC RECRUITING

By Ryan Bartow
247Sports.com

Florida State

Overview: The Seminoles have signed the No. 1 class in the ACC every year since 2009. This group was deep and stocked, especially at wide receiver and on the defensive line. They signed the nation's No. 1 defensive end with **Josh Sweat** and the No. 1 safety with **Derwin James**.

Headliner: Five-star freak show defensive end Josh Sweat. He's all of 6-5, 240 pounds with sub-4.5 speed. Arguably as good of a prospect as anyone in the country in the 2015 cycle. Huge upside with tremendous explosion.

Sleeper: **Sh'mar Kilby-Lane** fills a need area at linebacker. The quiet, focused outside linebacker has ideal size. A U.S. Army All-American goes about his business just like his play on the field, in an efficient manner.

Bottom Line: Few programs in the nation have as bright of a future as the Seminoles. They are stocked and deep at every position. The gap continues to widen between them and the rest of the ACC due to the elite personnel acquisition of this cycle and the last few classes.

Clemson

Overview: Every few years Clemson signs a deep class that serves as the foundation for its team for the next three or four seasons. They did the same in terms of depth in the 2008 and 2011 classes. This year, the Tigers inked arguably their best offensive line class in the modern era led by four lean tackle bodies. They also loaded up on the defensive line, signing seven.

Headliner: **Albert Huggins** is the next war daddy defensive tackle in a program known for them. He stayed in-state and brings the power and character on which Clemson prides itself.

Sleeper: **Van Smith** is a pure football player. A guy that rushed for over 1,000 yards, won MVP in a 7-on-7 as a receiver, can play in the box and will thrive as a two-deep free safety. The Pittsburgh transplant was a big get out of North Carolina for the Tigers.

Bottom Line: Clemson got the top two receivers out of Tampa to carry on its tremendous new tradition at the position, signing **Deon Cain** and **Ray Ray McCloud**. They loaded up at defensive tackle, headlined by **Christian Wilkins**, and offensive tackle headlined by **Mitch Hyatt**. Also keep an eye on cornerback **Mark Fields** to help early in his career. This is a stacked group.

Miami

Overview: Only eight of the Hurricanes' 23 signees were from America's No. 1 talent bin in South Florida. Al Golden stressed Miami needed to oversign on the offensive line and the Canes reached with many of their takes up front.

Headliner: **Mark Walton** has the explosion and game-breaking ability to be the next great one in a long line of super Hurricane backs. Walton was lights out for national power Miami Booker T. Washington. In a rarity, Miami was able to keep one of the better south Florida recruits home.

Sleeper: It took the Hurricanes until the week before National Signing Day to offer **Sheldrick Redwine** from nearby Miami Killian. The 6-1 corner with length and range is something Miami has missed on during the Golden era as the program continues to struggle in its development of defensive backs.

Bottom Line: Miami needs to have 75-to-85 percent from West Palm Beach down to Coral Gables for any recruiting class to be considered a success. It's the No. 1 reason why you take the Miami job: geography. The U happens to be located where the most Division-I talent per capita is closest to its own campus. To only sign a third from that area is a gross disappointment.

North Carolina

Overview: The Tar Heels needed to load up on defensive personnel and struggled landing the top defensive

TOP 20 INCOMING ACC RECRUITS

Rk.	Player	Ht./Wt.	Pos.	Hometown/School	College
1.	Derwin James	6-2/201	S	Haines City, Fla.	Florida State
2.	Josh Sweat	6-5/240	DE	Chaesapeake, Va./Oscar Smith	Florida State
3.	Tarvarus McFadden	6-2/198	CB	Fort Lauderdale, Fla./American Heritage	Florida State
4.	Deon Cain	6-1/194	WR	Tampa, Fla./Tampa Bay Tech	Clemson
5.	George Campbell	6-3/184	WR	Tarpon Springs, Fla./East Lake	Florida State
6.	Mitch Hyatt	6-5/272	OT	Suwanee, Ga./North Gwinnett	Clemson
7.	Christian Wilkins	6-4/290	DT	Suffield, Conn./Suffield Academy	Clemson
8.	Jacques Patrick	6-1/230	RB	Orlando, Fla./Timber Creek	Florida State
9.	Jalen Dalton	6-6/260	DE	Clemmons, N.C./West Forsyth	North Carolina
10.	Deondre Francois	6-1/195	QB	Bradenton, Fla./IMG Academy	Florida State
11.	Johhny Frasier	5-10/229	RB	Princeton, N.C.	NC State
12.	Ray-Ray McCloud III	5-9/175	ATH	Tampa, Fla./Sickles	Clemson
13.	Mark Walton	5-10/179	RB	Miami, Fla./Booker T. Washington	Miami
14.	Albert Huggins	6-3/283	DT	Orangeburg, S.C./Orangeburg-Wilkinson	Clemson
15.	Abdul Bello	6-6/295	OT	Montverde, Fla./Montverde Academy	Florida State
16.	Mark Fields	5-11/190	CB	Cornelius, N.C./Hough	Clemson
17.	Da'Vante Phillips	6-2/204	WR	Miami, Fla./Central	Florida State
18.	Tim Settle	6-2/361	DT	Manassas, Va./Stonewall Jackson	Virginia Tech
19.	Jordan Whitehead	5-11/185	CB	Monaca, Pa./Central Valley	Pitt
20.	Darian Roseboro	6-4/285	DE	Lincolnton, N.C.	NC State

linemen in state, losing out on Shy Tuttle to Tennessee and Darian Roseboro to North Carolina State. They did do well in Charlotte by adding **Mason Veal** and dual-threat quarterback **Anthony Ratliff** out of the Queen City.

Headliner: **Jalen Dalton** has the length and off-the-edge burst that figures to help at the needed area of defensive end. The four-star recruit enrolled early and has a chance to be the next great sack-artist for North Carolina.

Sleeper: Don't be surprised if **Tommy Hatton** wins the Remington Award down the road as the nation's top center. He has the edge, toughness, football IQ and work ethic to be a legit stud in Chapel Hill.

Bottom Line: UNC signed its best offensive line class in the modern era. Located in an area not blessed traditionally at producing run blockers, the Heels knocked this class out of the park. Hatton is one of the nation's top centers, a legit four-star blocker with an edge from north Jersey. Adding two lengthy linemen like Veal and **William Sweet** helps the future on the edges.

Virginia Tech

Overview: A class filled with size, toughness and quality evaluations. Sounds familiar. Now watch the player development come in and this group will look even better in four to five years.

Headliner: **Dwayne Lawson** represents the quarterback of the future. He's raw but has the length and mobility to potentially be a star.

Sleeper: **Harry Lewis** is a 400-pound bencher from a storied program in Hampton (Va.) Phoebus. He should move inside to defensive tackle and could develop into the traditional over-achiever with an edge that has backboned Virginia Tech's success in the ACC.

Bottom Line: The Hokies once were in position to sign the nation's No. 1 defensive line class before Josh Sweat left the state for Florida State and Jalen Dalton opted to stay home and play for North Carolina. The Hokies still rebounded well by inking **Yosuah Nijman**, **Trevon Hill**, **Darius Fullwood**, **Tim Settle**, **Harry Lewis** and **Eric Whitehead** for a solid defensive line haul.

North Carolina State

Overview: For the first time ever, NC State signed four of the top seven recruits within its borders. It was uncharted waters for this program and they hit a home run.

Headliner: Four-star defensive end **Darian Roseboro** started the flurry in state. It opened the door for four-star franchise left tackle **Emanuel McGirt**, four-star all-purpose running back **Nyheim Hines** and four-star big back **Johnny Frasier**.

Sleeper: **Eurndraus Bryant** was a late offer just days before National Signing Day. He has the power and force as a defensive tackle that will make this take look super in the years to come. This class overall is filled with quality evaluations and sleepers with upside, especially on the defensive line.

Bottom Line: The combo of Hines and Frasier is as good of a running back 1-2 punch that anyone signed in America. It can't be emphasized enough the job the Wolfpack staff did in keeping most of the elite talent at home, especially keeping the three top recruits in their backyard.

Louisville

Overview: A group filled with skill and size, with solid depth at running back and linebacker. **Lamar Jackson** gives the Cardinals a potential dual-threat four-star option for the future at quarterback.

Headliner: **James Allen**. One of the elite backs in Florida, Allen has the goods to be an All-ACC back by year two. He's country strong with tremendous balance and toughness. A legit steal for the Cardinals.

Sleeper: **Khane Pass** has that edge to be a headhunter on the back end for the Cardinals. Coming out of national powerhouse Columbus (Ga.) Carver, Pass is a no-nonsense ball-hawk that doesn't back down from anyone.

Bottom Line: For the Cardinals to make that push up the ACC ranks, they must stock the roster with talent from the Southeast. This class is filled with kids from Florida, Mississippi and Alabama, areas that always produce talent.

Georgia Tech

Overview: The Yellow Jackets can usually get everything they need in this staff's familiar grounds in-state. They opted to go out-of-state for 10 signees this cycle.

Headliner: In a rarity, every single signee was of the three-star variety. Tons of kids with upside and solid takes for a balanced group.

Sleeper: **Kyle Henderson** is a legacy out of one of Florida's better programs at Tampa (Fla.) Plant. He's a powerful defensive tackle with upside.

Bottom Line: No one recruits more to fit its scheme than the Yellow Jackets, who continue to win at a high rate under Paul Johnson. The class is filled with smaller, mobile linemen and a variety of backs on offense, along with a deep group of linebackers and defensive tackles on the other side.

Virginia

Overview: A group that received high praise a year ago has plenty of solid takes with a coaching staff that continues to be on the hot seat. It was a group that emphasized size and body types sans its defensive back takes.

Headliner: **Jahvoni Simmons** played for a state champion at Ocean Lakes in Virginia Beach, Va., and is an old-school, downhill middle 'backer with some range.

Sleeper: **Steven Wright** from south Georgia has a tremendous frame (6-4, 235) and an edge that could make many smile for years to come in Charlottesville.

Bottom Line: The Cavaliers did okay filling needs at linebacker along with some size on the defensive line and speed at defensive back. It's what one can expect when recruiting with a coaching staff on the continued hot seat.

Duke

Overview: The Blue Devils signed not one, but two U.S. Army All-Americans. And both signees — outside linebacker **Ben Humphreys** and slot receiver **TJ Rahming** — scored touchdowns in America's biggest high school all-star game. It's proof that Duke's recent winning ways haven't gone unnoticed by America's elite recruits.

Headliner: Humphreys comes in well-coached out of California powerhouse Mater Dei. He has super cover skills and a frame to help the Blue Devils right away with all of his best ball still years ahead.

Sleeper: **Brandon Boyce** is undersized at a position (defensive tackle) where height matters the least. He's a load for anyone to handle and could be Duke's version of Grady Jarrett.

Bottom Line: Duke's brand for football is only gaining traction as this staff continues to overachieve. The wins are paying off on the recruiting trail in a big way and the takes are quality. A tremendous overall haul by one of America's more underrated staffs.

Wake Forest

Overview: In this staff's first full year recruiting the region, they landed several of the top athletes in North Carolina along with their continued share of out-of-state sleepers and quality gems.

Headliner: Running back **Rocky Reid**, a former Tennessee commit, is a power back who put up gigantic numbers on the prep level. His name is big in the state of North Carolina, as was his production. Keeping him home was a major shot of juice for the Demon Deacons.

Sleeper: This class is loaded with quality takes from cornerback **Amari Henderson** to running back **Matt Colburn** to offensive tackle **T.J. Haney** to tight end **Bowman Archibald** to wide receiver **Steven Claude**. All were overlooked by some of the big dogs and arrive with an edge and talent.

Bottom Line: **Dionte Austin** is a four-star cornerback out of Baltimore. He is the only four-star get for a program that usually doesn't get any. No worries as the rest of the class is stacked with excellent evaluations and stocked with many upside prospects.

Boston College

Overview: Boston College wisely stayed in New England to sign its linemen and then went elsewhere to get the majority of its skill, a consistent recipe.

Headliner: The offensive line class highlighted by **Chris Lindstrom**, **Anthony Palazzolo** and **Aaron Monteiro**, all local products, is what Boston College usually cranks out as one of the nation's better producers up front.

Sleeper: Defensive linemen **Wyatt Ray,** from south Florida, and **Ray Smith,** from San Diego, come from opposite ends of the country to a place they both have a chance of flourishing at.

Bottom Line: Big, local size with toughness. It's a group that was strong in the trenches complimented by some skill takes that have promise.

Pitt

Overview: The new staff did a solid job of doing what they could, given the shortened time together. Only landing three of the top 20 in-state recruits will need improvement going forward.

Headliner: **Jordan Whitehead** is one of the nation's top cornerbacks and should play right away. He chose the Panthers over Alabama, Ohio State and Penn State. Whitehead has an NFL-type upside.

Sleeper: Keep an eye on big corner **Malik Henderson**. The early enrollee out of Florida is just starting to tap into his promise.

Bottom Line: Add Whitehead and Henderson with safety **Jay Stocker** and the Panthers have to feel good about their secondary going forward. They also signed a solid group of backs and linebackers. They took less numbers in the cycle so the new staff can ink bigger groups in the years to come.

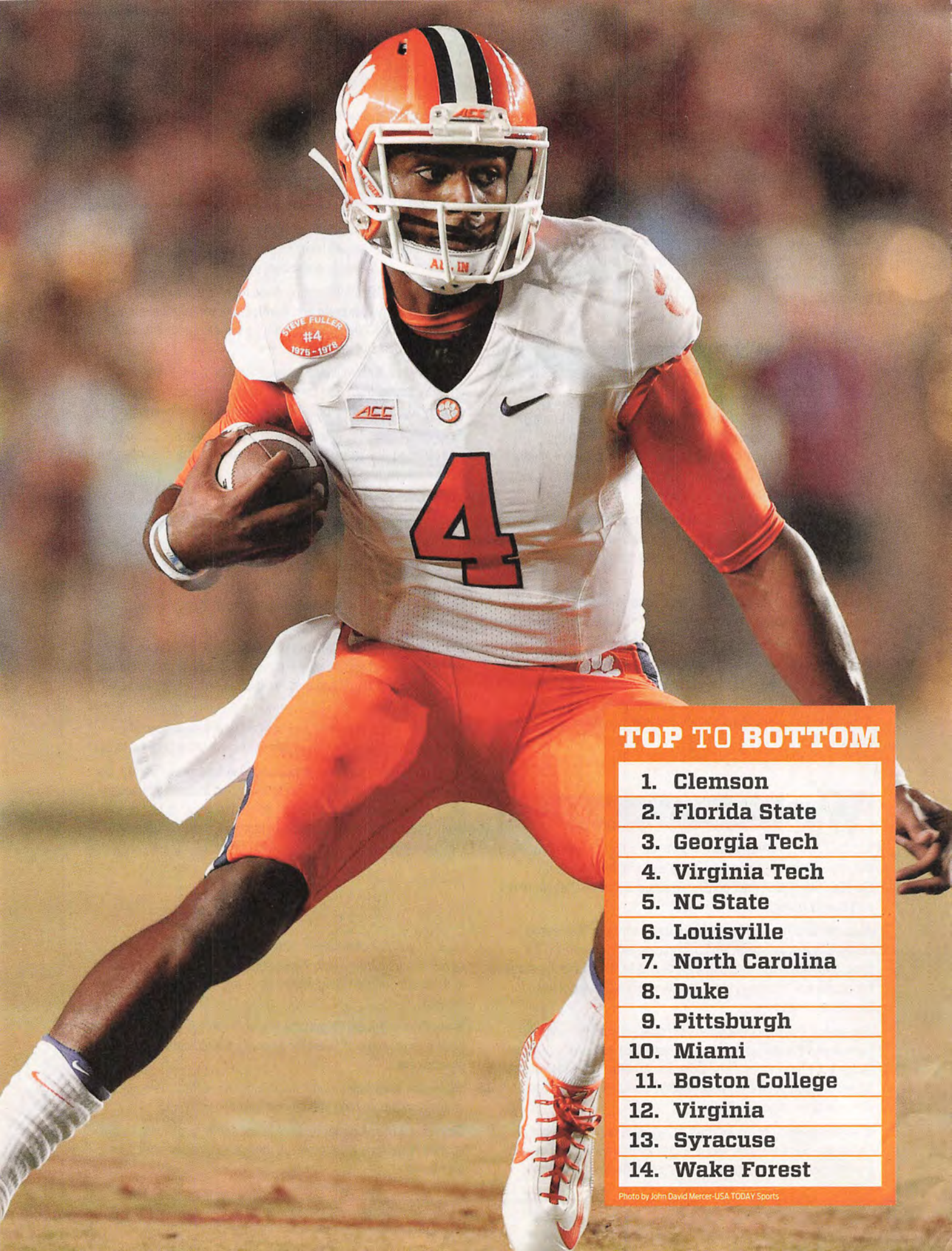
Syracuse

Overview: The Orange, at one point, had seven commits from south Florida but only signed two. A class that started out promising wound up being the lowest-ranked in the ACC.

Headliner: **Dontae Strickland** is a do-it-all four-star athlete that adds a major dose of talent for a program desperately in need of playmakers.

Sleeper: **Amir Ealey** is just scratching the surface as a jumbo athlete that would help at tight end or defensive end.

Bottom Line: A major dose of talent needs to be lured into upstate New York. It's a program that's been void of speed for a while now.



TOP TO BOTTOM

1. Clemson
2. Florida State
3. Georgia Tech
4. Virginia Tech
5. NC State
6. Louisville
7. North Carolina
8. Duke
9. Pittsburgh
10. Miami
11. Boston College
12. Virginia
13. Syracuse
14. Wake Forest

Photo by John David Mercer-USA TODAY Sports

PICKING THE ACC

Talented Tigers Have the Horses to Dethrone Florida State

Clemson coach Dabo Swinney says quarterback Deshaun Watson's rehabilitation from knee surgery is "way ahead of schedule."

Watson, a sophomore star-in-the-making, says he'll be ready for the Tigers' first game on Sept. 5. After what he was able to do in his first year with the Tigers, it's probably a smart bet to trust him.

Clemson will need a healthy Watson to wrest control of the ACC from Florida State, which despite another round of major personnel losses to the NFL, will be neck-and-neck with the Tigers in the conference race.

Georgia Tech and Virginia Tech figure to have the best shot from the Coastal Division side. But Clemson has something special in Watson.

The 6-2, 205-pound sophomore from Gainesville, Ga., threw for 14 touchdowns and ran for five in a limited role last season. He has the potential to be the difference in a tight ACC race, if he's healthy.

Watson is already somewhat of a folk hero in football-mad Tigertown. He accounted for four touchdowns in Clemson's 35-17 win over rival South Carolina, despite playing with a torn ACL in his left knee.

He had surgery in December to repair the knee and did not practice in the spring but was able to jog and throw passes. He was able to work on what Swinney called "mental reps," which should help come the fall.

"I just expect to have him take it to another level from a mental standpoint," Swinney said.

Watson's physical gifts were evident when he was healthy last season. A strong-armed passer and a nimble rusher, he can do a little bit of everything. He nearly led the Tigers to an upset at Florida State, completing 19 of 28 passes for 266 yards and rushing for a touchdown in a 23-17 overtime loss in his first extensive college action.

In his first college start, he threw for 435 yards and six touchdowns in a 50-35 rout of North Carolina. He followed up with 267 passing yards, two passing touchdowns and two rushing touchdowns in a 41-0 romp over NC State.

But Watson broke a finger on his throwing hand in his next start and missed three games. He returned briefly in a 28-6 loss at Georgia Tech, but hurt his knee. Then he did more damage to the knee the following week in practice. He played against South Carolina anyway and led the Tigers to their first win over the Gamecocks in six years.

The talented quarterback will have

CONFERENCE PICKS

ATLANTIC DIV.	Good news	Bad news	Our call
1. Clemson	Main weapons return, including a pair of dynamic WRs (Mike Williams, Artavis Scott).	Tigers have to replace eight starters from the country's top defense.	We'll just say Deshaun Watson is healthy and the Tigers will nose FSU in a tight race.
2. Florida State	RB Dalvin Cook, S Jalen Ramsey are two of the best players in the country.	The talent drain includes 11 players who were drafted.	Even great programs have to take a half-step back every once in a while..
3. NC State	Senior QB Jacoby Brissett is back, so are eight starters on an improving defense.	The offense needs two new tackles; the defensive line has holes to fill.	Brissett helps the Wolfpack take another step forward from last year's 8-5 finish.
4. Louisville	There's a handful of talented transfers waiting in the wings, led by DE Devonte Fields.	A boatload of talent (10 draft picks) left for the NFL.	The retooled Cards will have to stay healthy to post another 8- or 9-win season.
5. Boston College	No one was able to lure away coach Steve Addazio.	QB Tyler Murphy and all five starters on the offensive line have to be replaced.	Addazio does more with less; he'll find a way to get the Eagles to a third straight bowl.
6. Syracuse	The lousy, injury-filled 2014 season is over.	The defense, which was strong during said misery, needs nine new starters.	Scott Shafer is in rebuilding mode, which equals another bowl season at home.
7. Wake Forest	QB John Wolford's a year older; LB Brandon Chubb, S Ryan Janvion back on defense.	Top-notch corner Kevin Johnson is in the NFL.	There's no shortcut for second-year coach Dave Clawson. He needs more time.
COASTAL DIV.			
1. Georgia Tech	QB Justin Thomas is a wizard in Paul Johnson's option offense.	The top four running backs are not.	The Jackets cross over against FSU and Clemson. No margin of error this season.
2. Virginia Tech	The defensive line is the best in the ACC.	There's still question marks about the offense and the health of RB Marshawn Williams.	Tech, by virtue of the best draw and best defense, could certainly win its first division title since 2011.
3. North Carolina	All the major parts from the ACC's third-best scoring offense return.	The defense got a new coach (Gene Chizik), but needs a talent upgrade.	With just a little defensive improvement, the Tar Heels will win eight or nine games.
4. Duke	All-ACC LB Kelby Brown and TE Braxton Deaver are back after missing 2014.	All-ACC WR Jamison Crowder and OT Laken Tomlinson are in the NFL.	The Blue Devils will factor in the division race and win eight or nine games.
5. Pittsburgh	RB James Conner (1,765 yards), WR Tyler Boyd (1,261 yards) are a great pair.	Another coaching change slows any momentum from the previous two years.	Panthers slept through their "sleeper" potential last year. There's talent to surprise, but no consistency.
6. Miami	QB Brad Kaaya (3,198 yards) turned out to be a gem as a first-year starter.	RB Duke Johnson, WR Phillip Dorsett, OT Ereck Flowers aren't around to help Kaaya.	Canes completely underachieved last season, will struggle without the talent it lost to the NFL.
7. Virginia	Oregon and Florida State are off the schedule.	There still aren't many breaks on the new schedule.	Working through QB issues, the Cavaliers would be a bowl team with an easier schedule.

help. Sophomore running back Wayne Gallman will be a year better and there isn't a better pair of receivers in the ACC than Artavis Scott and Mike Williams.

Swinney's confident he has recruited well enough to reload on defense and hold off FSU, which has won 24 straight ACC games and three straight conference titles.

"Last year, we were just so experienced and our second team was as good as our first team (on defense)," Swinney said. "Whereas this year, our first group is really, really good."

They will need to be. FSU loses quarterback Jameis Winston, the No. 1 overall pick in the NFL Draft, but dynamic running back Dalvin Cook will make the transition a lot easier for, presumably, Sean Maguire.

The Nov. 7 meeting at Clemson will likely determine the Atlantic division race, while the Georgia Tech-Virginia Tech winner on Nov. 12 might be the difference in another tight Coastal Division scrum.

— Joe Giglio

HONOR ROLL

Most accurate passer	Brad Kaaya	Miami
Strongest arm	Deshaun Watson	Clemson
Best scrambler	Marquise Williams	North Carolina
Coolest in the clutch	Justin Thomas	Georgia Tech
Toughest to bring down	James Conner	Pitt
Best hands	Artavis Scott	Clemson
Most dangerous deep threat	Tyler Boyd	Pitt
Best pass blocker	Landon Turner	North Carolina
Best run blocker	Bryan Chamberlain	Georgia Tech
Best cover corner	Kendall Fuller	Virginia Tech
Best pass rusher	Ken Ekanem	Virginia Tech
Special teams demon	Tyler Boyd	Pitt

Most Valuable Player

Deshaun Watson, QB, Clemson

Offensive Player of the Year

Justin Thomas, QB, Georgia Tech

Defensive Player of the Year

Jalen Ramsey, S, Florida State

Newcomer of the Year

Devonte Fields, DE, Louisville

Lindy's ALL-ACC TEAM

OFFENSE - FIRST TEAM

QB	Deshaun Watson	So.	Clemson
RB	Dalvin Cook	So.	Florida State
RB	James Conner	Jr.	Pittsburgh
WR	Tyler Boyd	Jr.	Pittsburgh
WR	Mike Williams	Jr.	Clemson
TE	Braxton Deaver	Sr.	Duke
C	Matt Skura	Sr.	Duke
OL	Bryan Chamberlain	Sr.	Georgia Tech
OL	Landon Turner	Sr.	North Carolina
OL	Roderick Johnson	So.	Florida State
OL	Wyatt Teller	So.	Virginia Tech
AP	Ryan Switzer	Jr.	North Carolina
K	Roberto Aguayo	Jr.	Florida State

DEFENSE - FIRST TEAM

DE	Dadi Nicolas	Sr.	Virginia Tech
DT	Adam Gotsis	Sr.	Georgia Tech
DT	Luther Maddy	Sr.	Virginia Tech
DE	Shaq Lawson	Jr.	Clemson
LB	Kelby Brown	Sr.	Duke
LB	James Burgess	Sr.	Louisville
LB	Terrance Smith	Sr.	Florida State
DB	Jalen Ramsey	Jr.	Florida State
DB	Jeremy Cash	Sr.	Duke
DB	Kendall Fuller	Jr.	Virginia Tech
DB	DeVon Edwards	Jr.	Duke
P	Alex Kinal	Sr.	Wake Forest

OFFENSE - SECOND TEAM

QB	Justin Thomas	Jr.	Georgia Tech
RB	Jon Hilliman	So.	Boston College
RB	Wayne Gallman	So.	Clemson
WR	Artavis Scott	So.	Clemson
WR	Travis Rudolph	So.	Florida State
TE	Bucky Hodges	So.	Virginia Tech
C	Ryan Norton	Sr.	Clemson
OL	Kareem Are	Jr.	Florida State
OL	Errin Joe	Sr.	Georgia Tech
OL	Joe Thuney	Sr.	NC State
OL	Jonathan McLaughlin	Jr.	Virginia Tech
AP	Matt Dayes	Jr.	NC State
K	Ross Martin	Sr.	Duke

DEFENSE - SECOND TEAM

DE	Sheldon Rankins	Sr.	Louisville
DT	Connor Wujciak	Sr.	Boston College
DT	Derrick Nnadi	So.	Florida State
DE	Ken Ekanem	Jr.	Virginia Tech
LB	Reggie Northrup	Sr.	Florida State
LB	P.J. Davis	Jr.	Georgia Tech
LB	Brandon Chubb	Sr.	Wake Forest
DB	Jamal Golden	Sr.	Georgia Tech
DB	Quin Blanding	So.	Virginia
DB	Nate Andrews	Jr.	Florida State
DB	MacKensie Alexander	So.	Clemson
P	Will Monday	Sr.	Duke

OFFENSE - THIRD TEAM

QB	Marquise Williams	Sr.	North Carolina
RB	Brandon Radcliff	Jr.	Louisville
RB	Shadrach Thornton	Sr.	NC State
WR	Isaiah Ford	So.	Virginia Tech
WR	Jesus Wilson	Jr.	Florida State
TE	Cam Serigne	So.	Wake Forest
C	Freddie Burden	Jr.	Georgia Tech
OL	Dorian Johnson	Jr.	Pittsburgh
OL	Trey Braun	Sr.	Georgia Tech
OL	Rob Trudo	Sr.	Syracuse
OL	Isaiah Battle	Sr.	Clemson
AP	Smoke Mizzell	Jr.	Virginia
K	Ian Frye	Sr.	Virginia

DEFENSE - THIRD TEAM

DE	Devonte Fields	Jr.	Louisville
DT	Derrick Mitchell	Sr.	Florida State
DT	Carlos Watkins	Jr.	Clemson
DE	Mike Rose	Sr.	NC State
LB	Deon Clarke	Sr.	Virginia Tech
LB	Keith Kelsey	Jr.	Louisville
LB	Steven Daniels	Sr.	Boston College
DB	Maurice Canady	Sr.	Virginia
DB	Deon Bush	Sr.	Miami
DB	Lafayette Pitts	Jr.	Pittsburgh
DB	Ryan Janvion	Jr.	Wake Forest
P	Justin Vogel	Jr.	Miami

goldenflake.com

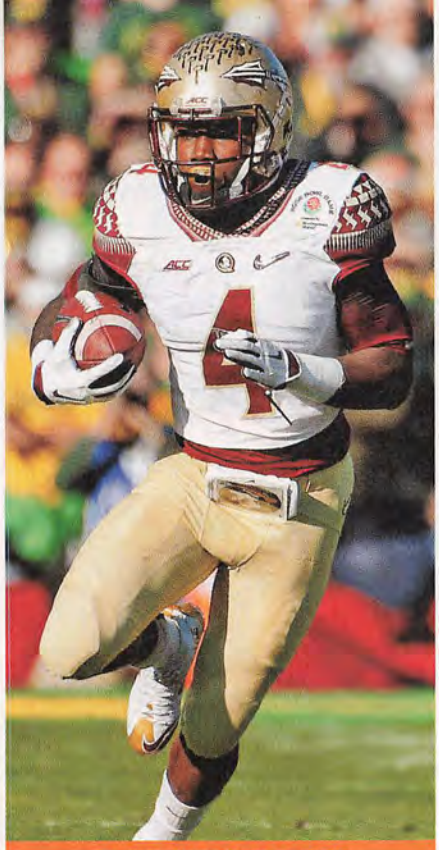
Seasoned Veterans and Pre-Season Favorites

Golden Flake

The South's Original Potato Chip.

THE BIG ONES

Sept. 3 North Carolina vs. South Carolina (Charlotte)	Steve Spurrier looks to remain perfect (5-0) against the Tar Heels.
Sept. 5 Auburn vs. Louisville (Atlanta)	Louisville's three SEC transfers get a familiar foe in the Tigers.
Sept. 7 Ohio State at Virginia Tech	Only one team beat the national champions last year.
Sept. 17 Clemson at Louisville	Third game for the Tigers, first real test for Deshaun Watson's knee.
Sept. 18 Florida State at Boston College	Even with Jameis Winston, the Noles struggled with the Eagles.
Sept. 19 Nebraska at Miami	Canes lost a 41-31 shootout in Lincoln last year.
Sept. 26 Virginia Tech at East Carolina	The Pirates have won four straight over ACC foes.
Oct. 3 Notre Dame at Clemson	First meeting of football powers since 1979.
Oct. 9 NC State at Virginia Tech	Friday night fun between the Wolfpack O and the Hokies' D.
Oct. 10 Georgia Tech at Clemson Miami at Florida State	It's almost always a close game when these two get together. ACC needs more drama from these two, just like last year's game.
Oct. 17 Louisville at Florida State Virginia Tech at Miami	FSU's 42-31 comeback in '14 featured 21 draft picks between the teams. The Canes have won two of the past three in dominant fashion.
Oct. 24 Clemson at Miami Florida State at Georgia Tech	Just fifth meeting since Miami joined ACC in '04, first since '10. Rematch of 2014 and 2012 ACC title games.
Oct. 31 Clemson at NC State	Tigers' last division loss, to a team other than FSU, was in Raleigh in 2011.
Nov. 7 Florida State at Clemson Duke at North Carolina	Division title figures to be at stake, Noles have won 4 of 5 in series. UNC cost Duke a division title with last year's 45-20 blowout in Durham.
Nov. 12 Virginia Tech at Georgia Tech	The Hokies (20-9) have been a tough out on Thursday nights.
Nov. 14 NC State at Florida State	'Noles haven't lost an ACC game since 2012 — 17-16 at NC State.
Nov. 21 Georgia Tech at Miami	The option baffled Miami last year in Paul Johnson's first win over the Canes.
Nov. 28 North Carolina at NC State Georgia at Georgia Tech Clemson at South Carolina Florida State at Florida	The Wolfpack has won six of the last eight against the Tar Heels. Jackets ended five-year losing streak with last year's 30-24 OT win. Tigers ended their five-year losing streak with last year's 35-17 win. Jimbo Fisher's 4-1 vs. the Gators and unbeaten in two trips to the Swamp.



DALVIN COOK

Photo by John Pyle

BOWL CONNECTIONS

If the ACC champ isn't in the four-team College Football Playoff, it can be selected for the four Big Six bowls outside of the national semifinals. Other league affiliations:

Citrus vs. SEC
Russell Athletic Bowl vs. Big 12
Sun vs. Pac-12
Belk vs. SEC
Music City vs. SEC
Tax Slayer vs. SEC
Pinstripe vs. Big Ten
Military vs. AAC
Independence vs. SEC
Quick Lane vs. Big Ten

*The ACC will split six appearances in the Tax Slayer and Music City bowls with the Big Ten over the next six seasons.
*The ACC has further conditional agreements with the St. Petersburg and Birmingham bowls.

TOP 10 NFL TALENT

1. Jalen Ramsey	DB	Jr.	Florida State	Ability to play all over secondary is huge plus.
2. Kendall Fuller	CB	Jr.	Virginia Tech	Has NFL pedigree and smooth cover skills.
3. Terrance Smith	LB	Sr.	Florida State	Versatile athlete at the linebacker position.
4. Tyler Boyd	WR	Jr.	Pitt	Production, production, production.
5. Nate Andrews	S	Jr.	Florida State	Has been strong in run support.
6. Adam Gotsis	DT	Sr.	Georgia Tech	With size, speed, Aussie has been a recruiting gem.
7. James Conner	RB	Jr.	Pitt	Bowling-ball back reminds some of Eddie Lacy.
8. Luther Maddy	DT	Sr.	Virginia Tech	Only an injury delayed his arrival into the NFL.
9. Landon Turner	OG	Sr.	North Carolina	Rated the No. 2 senior guard available for 2016.
10. Jeremy Cash	S	Sr.	Duke	Experienced playmaker with the appropriate athleticism.

*Only draft-eligible players included.

WHERE FANS GO FOR TICKETS

TICKETCITY

800.SOLD.OUT

AROUND THE ACC

Who Has Coastal Edge? Check the Schedules

While Florida State and Clemson have dominated the ACC from the Atlantic Division, going a combined 43-2 against the rest of the conference since the start of the 2012 season, the biggest factor in the Coastal Division race has been the schedule.

With crossover games against Florida State and Clemson, repeating as Coastal champions will be a difficult task for Georgia Tech. Potential Coastal contenders Virginia Tech, Duke, North Carolina and Pittsburgh don't have to play either FSU or Clemson from the Atlantic side.

The ACC had brief discussions in the spring about ditching the division model and using a rotating schedule that would put the two best teams in the championship game, but that concept didn't gain any momentum. There's no incentive for the schools on the Coastal side to back any potential changes.

Reconfiguring the divisions has been resisted as well, despite the imbalance in financial resources on the Atlantic side. FSU, Clemson and Louisville all have bigger athletic budgets than any school in the Coastal.

There's no perfect solution, but counting only division games to determine the division winner might be the easiest and fairest.

Until that relatively simple change, the Coastal race will be as much about whom you don't play, as it is who you beat.

RANKING THE SCHEDULES

Starting with the most difficult in the ACC and working our way softer ...

1. Georgia Tech. Since Clemson is Georgia Tech's primary cross-division partner, once every seven years the Jackets will lose the schedule lottery and have to face the Tigers and Florida State in the same season. Considering Miami is the only other Coastal team that can happen to (and did this year), that's a significant disadvantage.

That it falls in a year in which the Jackets have a legitimate chance to win the conference, it's almost double punishment.

The Jackets open with two incredibly easy games — Alcorn State and Tulane — and then you could make the argument no team in the country will have a tougher slate over the final 10 games. Tech begins that stretch against Notre Dame and finishes with Georgia.

FOUR-YEAR STANDINGS

It's back to the good old days for Florida State, and back to the bad old days for everyone else. OK, so things aren't that bad for Clemson and Georgia Tech, but pretty much everybody else in the league is simply trying to hang in there while watching those three teams win all the time.

ATLANTIC	ACC	Pct.	ALL	Pct.	C/D	Maj	B	Comment
Florida State	28-4	.875	48-7	.873	3/3	3	4	Has beaten 24 ACC foes in a row.
Clemson	26-6	.813	42-11	.792	1/1	2	4	Suddenly 42 wins in four seasons.
Louisville	5-3	.625	39-13	.750	0/0	1	4	Seems to fit into ACC power structure.
Boston College	12-20	.375	20-30	.400	0/0	0	2	Successive .500 ACC seasons, eyeing breakthrough.
NC State	11-21	.344	26-25	.510	0/0	0	2	Seeking first ACC winning season of careers.
Wake Forest	11-21	.344	18-31	.367	0/0	0	1	Eeeek ... win totals: 6-5-4-3 ... what's next?
Syracuse	5-11	.313	23-27	.460	0/0	0	2	ACC is getting tougher and tougher.
COASTAL	**ACC**	**Pct.**	**ALL**	**Pct.**	**C/D**	**Maj**	**B**	**Comment**
Georgia Tech	21-11	.656	33-21	.611	0/2	1	4	Has won two of past three Coastal titles.
Virginia Tech	19-13	.594	33-20	.623	0/1	1	4	Has been on a fade route ... ready to bounce back?
Miami	16-16	.500	28-22	.560	0/0	0	2	Canes seeking a modicum of consistency.
North Carolina	16-16	.500	28-23	.549	0/0	0	3	Is running in place finally over?
Duke	15-17	.469	28-24	.538	0/1	0	3	Three straight bowls is school mark; how about a win?
Pittsburgh	7-9	.438	25-27	.481	0/0	0	4	Six wins every year; 1-for-4 in bowls.
Virginia	10-22	.313	19-30	.388	0/0	0	1	The rebuilding project continues.

Notes: Ch/D=ACC and Division Championships; M=Major bowls; B=Bowls;

*Conference records for Pitt and Syracuse are for only 2 years, and Louisville for 1, but overall marks are for 4 years.

2. Miami. One of the reasons why Miami had more draft picks (seven) than wins (six) last year was the schedule. It doesn't get any easier this year with an Atlantic side trade of Louisville for Clemson.

The Canes will also get a challenge out of the league with a home date against Nebraska. And a Thursday night trip to Cincinnati could be tricky.

3. Louisville. The Cardinals open with Auburn (in Atlanta) and close on the road against improving Kentucky. In addition to the usual games with Clemson and FSU, two of their make-or-break ACC games are on the road (NC State, Pitt).

4. Syracuse. The Orange needs to find wins for coach Scott Shafer and that's going to be difficult with the addition of LSU to its normal ACC slate.

5. Virginia. The Cavaliers swap in Syracuse for FSU this year, a welcomed relief, but they still have an uphill climb in the non-conference schedule with a road trip to UCLA and home dates with Notre Dame and Boise State.

6. Boston College. The Eagles got their best win (USC) out of the league last season. They get a shot at Notre Dame (at Fenway Park) and Northern Illinois (11-3 a year ago) this season. Steve Addazio's group also has annual dates with FSU, Clemson, Louisville and Virginia Tech (its primary crossover partner).

7. Clemson. The Tigers have a demanding schedule with non-conference tests against Notre Dame and South Carolina, plus the crossover game with Georgia Tech. The Nov. 7 home game with Florida State will likely determine the ACC champion. It also comes late enough on the schedule that quarterback Deshaun Watson should be closer to full speed.

8. Virginia Tech. The Hokies get Ohio State at home a year after knocking off the national champions on the road. Non-conference trips to Purdue and East Carolina should be wins, and there's no FSU, no Clemson and no Louisville on the ACC slate.

9. Wake Forest. The good news is there are no trips to Utah State or Louisiana-Monroe this season (both losses for the Deacons last season). The bad news is FSU, Clemson and Louisville are still in the ACC.

10. NC State. The Wolfpack makes no apologies for its woeful non-conference schedule, which takes them to Old Dominion and South Alabama this year. As long as it has to play Florida State and Clemson annually, NC State will take the SEC approach that its division games are enough of a challenge.

JACOBY BRISSETT

Photo by Jamie Rhodes-USA TODAY Sports

11. Florida State. Unless Jim McElwain is an overnight miracle at Florida, and South Florida turns back the clock, this easy schedule will be held against FSU if it is in contention for a spot in the College Football Playoff.

Oklahoma State and Notre Dame are gone, replaced by Texas State and USF. A crossover with Georgia Tech will potentially help (if the Noles can win), and there's the annual game with Clemson. But, otherwise, there are a lot of easy outs on this schedule.

12. North Carolina. The Tar Heels went from Notre Dame-Clemson-East Carolina last year (all losses), to South Carolina-Wake Forest-Illinois this year. That switch alone should equal two more wins. They miss FSU, Clemson and Louisville.

13. Pittsburgh. The Panthers, with their soft schedule — and the talent of running back James Conner and receiver Tyler Boyd — can be the Coastal's surprise winner.

14. Duke. Of Duke's 25 wins since the start of 2012 season, only six are against FBS teams that finished the season with a winning record. With no FSU, Clemson or Louisville — and with Northwestern, Tulane and Army West Point in non-conference — it's difficult to imagine any Power 5 conference team with an easier schedule than this one.

DRAFT STUFF

Florida State led the country with 11 draft picks, pushing the Noles' three-year total to 29, which is the most any program has ever produced.

Louisville was second in the country with 10 draft picks. Overall, the ACC had 47 players taken, second to the SEC (54).

The 2016 draft is not shaping up to be as productive for the ACC, but Florida State defensive back Jalen Ramsey, Virginia Tech cornerback Kendall Fuller and Pittsburgh receiver Tyler Boyd, are among those considered first-round prospects.

COMING IN

NC State improved by five wins last season thanks in large part to the arrival of Florida transfer Jacoby Brissett.

Florida State doesn't need drastic improvement, but is hoping Notre Dame transfer quarterback Everett Golson can keep the Seminoles near the top of the national rankings.

Golson is eligible this season for FSU, which also has junior Sean Maguire and redshirt freshman J.J. Cosentino in the mix to replace Heisman winner and No. 1 overall pick Jameis Winston.

Overall, Louisville will rely the most on transfers. The Cardinals will feature a pair of Georgia transfers in the secondary (safety Josh Harvey-Clemons and cornerback Shaq Wiggins), plus ex-TCU standout Devonte Fields at defensive end. On offense, the Cards added former Texas A&M receiver JaQuay Savage.

GOING OUT

There weren't too many high-profile exits from the ACC via transfers, but there were two interesting ones. Quarterback Greyson Lambert, who struggled at Virginia (10 TDs, 11 INTs), graduated and has a chance to be the starting quarterback at Georgia this season.

NC State lost freshman receiver Bo Hines (45 catches, 616 yards) who decided to transfer to Yale to improve his chances for a political career.

RATING THE ACC

QUARTERBACKS

1. Clemson
2. Georgia Tech
3. North Carolina
4. NC State
5. Miami
6. Florida State
7. Louisville
8. Pittsburgh
9. Syracuse
10. Virginia Tech
11. Duke
12. Wake Forest
13. Boston College
14. Virginia

The health of Clemson sophomore Deshaun Watson likely will be the difference in the ACC race this season.

Watson, who is recovering from major knee injury and missed parts of four games with a hand injury in 2014, was worth almost an extra two touchdowns per game to the Tigers' offense last season.

In the four games Watson took significant snaps, Clemson averaged 35.8 points per game. In the other eight games against FBS opponents, the Tigers averaged 23.1.

In an abbreviated but outstanding freshman season, Watson completed 93 of 137 passes for 1,466 yards, with 14 touchdowns and only two interceptions. He also ran for five touchdowns, including two on his injured left knee in a late-season win over rival South Carolina.

Georgia Tech junior Justin Thomas doesn't fit the traditional definition of a quarterback, but he might be the fastest player in the ACC and is a perfect fit for Paul Johnson's option offense.

North Carolina (Marquise Williams) and NC State (Jacoby Brissett) will go as far as their senior quarterbacks take them. Miami has a gem in sophomore Brad Kaaya, who threw for 3,198 yards last season and was the highest-rated passer (145.9) in the ACC. Everett Golson at Florida State is a big-time X-factor.

RUNNING BACKS

1. Florida State
2. NC State
3. Pittsburgh
4. North Carolina
5. Louisville
6. Clemson
7. Boston College
8. Miami
9. Virginia Tech
10. Duke
11. Georgia Tech
12. Virginia
13. Syracuse
14. Wake Forest

Florida State's Dalvin Cook got a late start to his freshman season, carrying the ball only 25 times in the first five games, but by the end of 2014, he was the Seminoles' best weapon on offense.

Cook ran for 880 of his 1,008 yards in the final nine games of the season. He finished the year with three straight 100-yard games, including 177 in the win over George Tech in the ACC title game.

Cook (6-0, 203) has a rare combination of size and speed. He has the potential to be the first FSU runner to post back-to-back 1,000-yard seasons since Warrick Dunn. Cook's role (170 carries last season) should increase this season, and FSU has plenty of options to go with him, including junior Mario Pender and touted freshman Jacques Patrick.

Pitt has an All-American talent in James Conner, but NC State has the deepest group in the conference.

Senior Shadrach Thornton (907 yards) can be a workhorse, while junior Matt Dayes (team-best 13 total TDs) and sophomore Jaylen Samuels are dual threats. The addition of freshmen Johnny Frasier (who switched during the recruiting process from FSU), Reggie Gallaspy and Nyheim Hines gives the Wolfpack a lot of choices.

RECEIVERS

1. Clemson
2. Florida State
3. Pittsburgh
4. North Carolina
5. Virginia Tech
6. Miami
7. Louisville
8. Virginia
9. Duke
10. Syracuse
11. NC State
12. Georgia Tech
13. Boston College
14. Wake Forest

Clemson put three receivers in the NFL in 2013 and 2014, and the Tigers appear to have two more on the way in junior Mike Williams and sophomore Artavis Scott.

Williams (6-4, 210) is a big target and a home-run threat, averaging 18.1 yards per catch last season. He led the team with 1,030 receiving yards on 57 catches. Scott, a speed-burner in the slot, led the team in catches (76) and receiving touchdowns (eight).

Those two would be enough for most teams, but the Tigers mined Florida (where they got Scott and Sammy Watkins) for a pair of touted freshmen in Deon Cain and Ray-Ray McCloud.

FSU has to replace Rashad Greene, the school's career leader in receptions (270) and receiving yards (3,830), but the Seminoles might have a better overall group than last year with a year of experience for Jesus Wilson, Travis Rudolph and Ermon Lane, plus the addition of freshmen George Campbell.

At Pitt, all Tyler Boyd has done in two college seasons is catch 163 passes for 2,435 yards and 15 touchdowns.

UNC returns four receivers with at least 35 catches, led by junior Ryan Switzer (61 catches, 757 yards).

OFFENSIVE LINE

1. Georgia Tech
2. North Carolina
3. Duke
4. Pittsburgh
5. Florida State
6. Clemson
7. Miami
8. NC State
9. Syracuse
10. Louisville
11. Virginia Tech
12. Virginia
13. Boston College
14. Wake Forest

Georgia Tech does not have conventional maulers up front, but what the Jackets do with their scheme, which is heavily dependent on cut blocks, is as effective as any unit in the country.

Mix in a year where four starters return, including both tackles with at least 20 career starts, and the Yellow Jackets have a slight edge over UNC for the best line in the conference.

The Jackets led the country with 342.1 rushing yards per game last season and ranked sixth in yards per carry (6.1). They also topped the country in third-down conversions (57.9 percent). Coach Paul Johnson needs a whole new cast of running backs, but whatever players Johnson plugs in likely will have success behind a veteran group, led by senior left tackle Bryan Chamberlain.

The Tar Heels return all five starters, and senior right guard Landon Turner has All-American potential.

One of the biggest reasons for Duke's rise in the Coastal Division has been strong line play. With senior Matt Skura back at center, that trend should continue.

Florida State is the most interesting unit in the conference. After losing four full-time starters (three were taken in the NFL Draft), the Seminoles are trying to reload around sophomore left tackle Roderick Johnson with a pair of junior college transfers.

PLAYERS TO WATCH

Mike Williams, Clemson
Pos: WR Ht: 6-4 Wt: 210

James Burgess, Louisville
Pos: LB Ht: 6-0 Wt: 229

DEFENSIVE LINE

1. Virginia Tech
2. Florida State
3. Clemson
4. Louisville
5. Boston College
6. Georgia Tech
7. Miami
8. Pittsburgh
9. NC State
10. Virginia
11. Wake Forest
12. Duke
13. North Carolina
14. Syracuse

Florida State has been pumping out NFL defensive linemen (six in the past three years), and will have another strong group thanks to the way it has been recruiting.

But Virginia Tech has the top group in the ACC this year, as long as the Hokies can stay healthy. That was the major issue last year, when they lost defensive tackle Luther Maddy, who missed the final nine games with a knee injury.

Maddy, a three-year starter, is expected to make a full recovery, while junior end Ken Ekanem (second in the ACC with 9.5 sacks) and senior Dadi Nicolas (second in the ACC in tackles for loss with 18.5) return.

The cupboard's not empty at FSU. Young tackles Derrick Nnadi and Demarcus Christmas have pro potential, as does sophomore end Lorenzo Featherston.

Clemson coach Dabo Swinney believes junior defensive end Shaq Lawson has the potential to fill Vic Beasley's shoes. The Tigers have to replace all four starters up front from the nation's top-rated defense, but are still loaded with talent.

Louisville suffered some heavy personnel losses on defense but has a stout pair of pass rushers in senior Sheldon Rankins and TCU transfer Devonte Fields.

LINEBACKERS

1. Louisville
2. Florida State
3. Georgia Tech
4. Boston College
5. Wake Forest
6. Virginia Tech
7. Clemson
8. Duke
9. Miami
10. NC State
11. Virginia
12. Syracuse
13. Pittsburgh
14. North Carolina

Senior James Burgess will have to do more for a rebuilt Louisville defense, but he was resourceful last season with three sacks and three interceptions to go with 71 tackles. Junior Keith Kelsey is another veteran hub.

Junior P.J. Davis (119 tackles) was at the center of a vastly improved Georgia Tech defense last season and will be helped by a pair of fifth-year seniors in Tyler Marcordes and Anthony Harrell.

Florida State is in great shape at linebacker when both Terrance Smith and Reggie Northrup are healthy. That wasn't the case often last season for the Seminoles.

Smith missed parts of four games, and Northrup suffered a knee injury in the College Football Playoff loss to Oregon. Sophomore Matthew Thomas will likely have an opportunity to shine for FSU.

Boston College ranked second in the country in rushing defense, and senior Steven Daniels returns to lead the linebackers. While Wake Forest struggled on offense last year, senior Brandon Chubb (109 tackles) made the defense respectable.

Duke loses David Helton, the ACC's leading tackler (134), but replaces him with sixth-year senior Kelby Brown, an All-ACC pick in 2013 who missed all of last season with a knee injury.

SECONDARY

1. Florida State
2. Duke
3. Virginia
4. Georgia Tech
5. Virginia Tech
6. Clemson
7. Louisville
8. Miami
9. NC State
10. Wake Forest
11. Pittsburgh
12. Boston College
13. North Carolina
14. Syracuse

This is the ACC's deepest position group with elite talent on all of the teams in the top half of the list.

There were 21 defensive players from the ACC taken in the last NFL Draft, but arguably none had a better season than Florida State junior Jalen Ramsey. Ramsey, who played safety last year, finished with 79 tackles, three sacks and two forced fumbles and was seemingly in all places at once for a banged-up FSU defense.

He will primarily play corner this season, but you figure Ramsey will find a way to continue to make big plays. He's joined in the defensive backfield by junior safety Nate Andrews; moving into Ramsey's "star" safety spot is sophomore Trey Marshall.

Duke safety Jeremy Cash, who began his career at Ohio State, has All-American potential and is the type of open-field tackler that makes the 4-2-5 defensive scheme work.

Virginia sophomore Quin Blanding is the top returning tackler (123) in the league and will only get better with age and added strength. The Cavaliers also boast corner Maurice Canady and get back fifth-year senior Demetrious Nicholson.

Louisville will replace safety Gerod Holliman, who led the NCAA with 14 interceptions, with Georgia transfer Josh Harvey-Clemons. The Cardinals have another Georgia transfer, Shaq Wiggins, at cornerback.

SPECIAL TEAMS

1. Duke
2. Florida State
3. Wake Forest
4. Louisville
5. Virginia
6. Georgia Tech
7. Boston College
8. Miami
9. Clemson
10. Virginia Tech
11. Pittsburgh
12. Syracuse
13. North Carolina
14. NC State

Kicker Ross Martin and punter Will Monday have started together for Duke for the past three years. Their contributions tend to be overlooked, but they've turned what was a program weakness into an annual strength.

Martin made 19 of 21 field goal attempts (90.5, best percentage in the ACC), and Monday averaged 43.0 yards per punt, third-best in the ACC. The Blue Devils also boast one of the top kick returners in the league in safety DeVon Edwards, who has two career touchdowns on kickoff returns.

There isn't a better kicker in the country than Florida State's Roberto Aguayo, a junior who was an All-American in each of his first two college seasons. Aguayo made 27 of 30 field goal attempts last season; for his career, he has made 197 of 201 kicks (field goals and PATs).

There weren't too many bright spots for Wake Forest last season, but punter Alex Kinal was one. The senior ranked second in the ACC in punting average (43.6 yards). And even though sophomore Mike Weaver didn't get many chances to shine, he was 15 of 19 on field goals tries.

ACC YEAR IN REVIEW

THE RACE

Florida State was a wire-to-wire winner, but it wasn't as easy as that might sound.

As it turned out, the Atlantic Division race spun on the conference opener between Clemson and FSU in Tallahassee. The Seminoles looked to be in trouble with 2013 Heisman winner Jameis Winston serving a one-game suspension, but the defense stood tall and replacement quarterback Sean Maguire hit Rashad Greene for a 74-yard touchdown pass with 6:04 to go for a 17-17 tie.

The Tigers started with the ball in overtime, but FSU stuffed a running play on fourth-and-1 from the 16. Two plays later, running back Karlos Williams bounced outside and went untouched around left end for the game-winning touchdown.

Since no other team really mounted a threat in the Atlantic, that was pretty much that, although the Seminoles had to strain to keep alive their perfect record and College Football Playoff hopes. They trailed Louisville entering the fourth quarter, but won, 42-31. They were down 23-10 to Miami at halftime, and got a late touchdown from Dalvin Cook to win, 30-26. Roberto Aguayo's 26-yard field goal with three seconds left was the difference in a 20-17 win over Boston College.

There was more parity in the Coastal. After a 2-2 start, Georgia Tech got hot, winning its final four conference games, including a 28-6 home win over Clemson to end its league season. Duke still had control of the division at that point, needing to win its final two games, but the Blue Devils fell to North Carolina to end dreams of making back-to-back appearances in the ACC title game.

THE CHAMPION

A year after stomping everybody, Florida State was the king of close calls in 2014, as Jameis Winston often fired interceptions early, only to rally the 'Noles in the second half. The narrow shaves continued in the ACC Championship Game against a prolific Georgia Tech option attack, with FSU finally able to pocket a 37-35 win after recovering an on-side kick with less than two minutes left and gaining a first down to kill the clock.

There would be no second-half miracle or repeat national title, though. Florida State, undone by five turnovers, was buried by Oregon, 59-20, in a playoff semi-final in the Rose Bowl.

Thus ended Winston's remarkable career — his only loss as a starter — and it closed the college curtain on many more talented Seminoles. FSU sent 11 players into the NFL Draft, the most of any team in the country.

THE STARS

Offensive Player of the Year: James Conner, RB, Pitt

Conner was a total bulldog, pounding for 1,765 yards and 26 touchdowns, even as defenses knew the 250-pounder was coming right at them downhill. He had to be special to knock off reigning Heisman winner Jameis Winston for this honor.

Defensive Player of the Year: Vic Beasley, DE, Clemson

Beasley, coming off an All-American 2013 season in which he had 23 tackles for loss, including 13 sacks, basically matched that production last season: 21.5 TFLs and 12 sacks. He edged Louisville S Gerod Holliman and his amazing 14 INTs for the award.

Coach of the Year: Paul Johnson, Georgia Tech

The Yellow Jackets hadn't been special much in the previous four seasons, but the full potency of the option attack was unleashed last season behind QB Justin Thomas. Johnson guided Tech, picked fifth in the Coastal in the preseason media poll, to a near ACC title.

THE POSTSEASON

When 11 of your 14 teams get invited to a bowl game, you must be doing something right. But when only four of them win — and the league champion gets drilled, 59-20, by a team that doesn't even win the national championship ... well, there's still work to be done.

Rose Bowl	Oregon 59, **Florida State 20**
Orange Bowl	**Georgia Tech 49**, Mississippi State 34
Russell Athletic Bowl	**Clemson 40**, Oklahoma 6
Belk Bowl	Georgia 37, **Louisville 14**
Pinstripe Bowl	Penn State 31, **Boston College 30**, OT
Sun Bowl	Arizona State 36, **Duke 31**
Military Bowl	**Virginia Tech 33**, Cincinnati 17
Independence Bowl	South Carolina 24, **Miami 21**
Quick Lane Bowl	Rutgers 40, **North Carolina 21**
St. Petersburg Bowl	**NC State 34**, UCF 27
Armed Forces Bowl	Houston 35, **Pittsburgh 34**

ALL-ACC TEAM

*as selected by the league coaches

OFFENSE - First Team

QB	Jameis Winston	Florida State
RB	James Conner	Pitt
RB	Duke Johnson	Miami
WR	Rashad Greene	Florida State
WR	Jamison Crowder	Duke
WR	Tyler Boyd	Pitt
TE	Nick O'Leary	Florida State
C	Shane McDermott	Miami
G	Laken Tomlinson	Duke
G	Tre' Jackson	Florida State
T	Cameron Erving	Florida State
T	T.J. Clemmings	Pitt
K	Roberto Aguayo	Florida State
AP	Jamison Crowder	Duke

OFFENSE - Second Team

QB	Justin Thomas	Georgia Tech
RB	Kevin Parks	Virginia
RB	Zach Laskey	Georgia Tech
WR	DeVante Parker	Louisville
WR	Phillip Dorsett	Miami
WR	DeAndre Smelter	Georgia Tech
TE	Clive Walford	Miami
C	Andy Gallik	Boston College
G	Shaquille Mason	Georgia Tech
G	Matt Rotheram	Pitt
T	Ereck Flowers	Miami
T	Jamon Brown	Louisville
K	Ian Frye	Virginia
AP	Tyler Boyd	Pitt

DEFENSE - First Team

DE	Vic Beasley	Clemson
DE	Mario Edwards Jr.	Florida State
DT	Grady Jarrett	Clemson
DT	Eddie Goldman	Florida State
LB	Denzel Perryman	Miami
LB	Stephone Anthony	Clemson
LB	Lorenzo Mauldin	Louisville
CB	Kendall Fuller	Virginia Tech
CB	Garry Peters	Clemson
S	Gerod Holliman	Louisville
S	Jalen Ramsey	Florida State
P	Wil Baumann	NC State

DEFENSE - Second Team

DE	Dadi Nicolas	Virginia Tech
DE	Eli Harold	Virginia
DT	Adam Gotsis	Georgia Tech
DT	Corey Marshall	Virginia Tech
LB	David Helton	Duke
LB	Terrance Smith	Florida State
LB	Henry Coley	Virginia
CB	P.J. Williams	Florida State
CB	Kevin Johnson	Wake Forest
S	Quin Blanding	Virginia
S	Jeremy Cash	Duke
P	Alex Kinal	Wake Forest

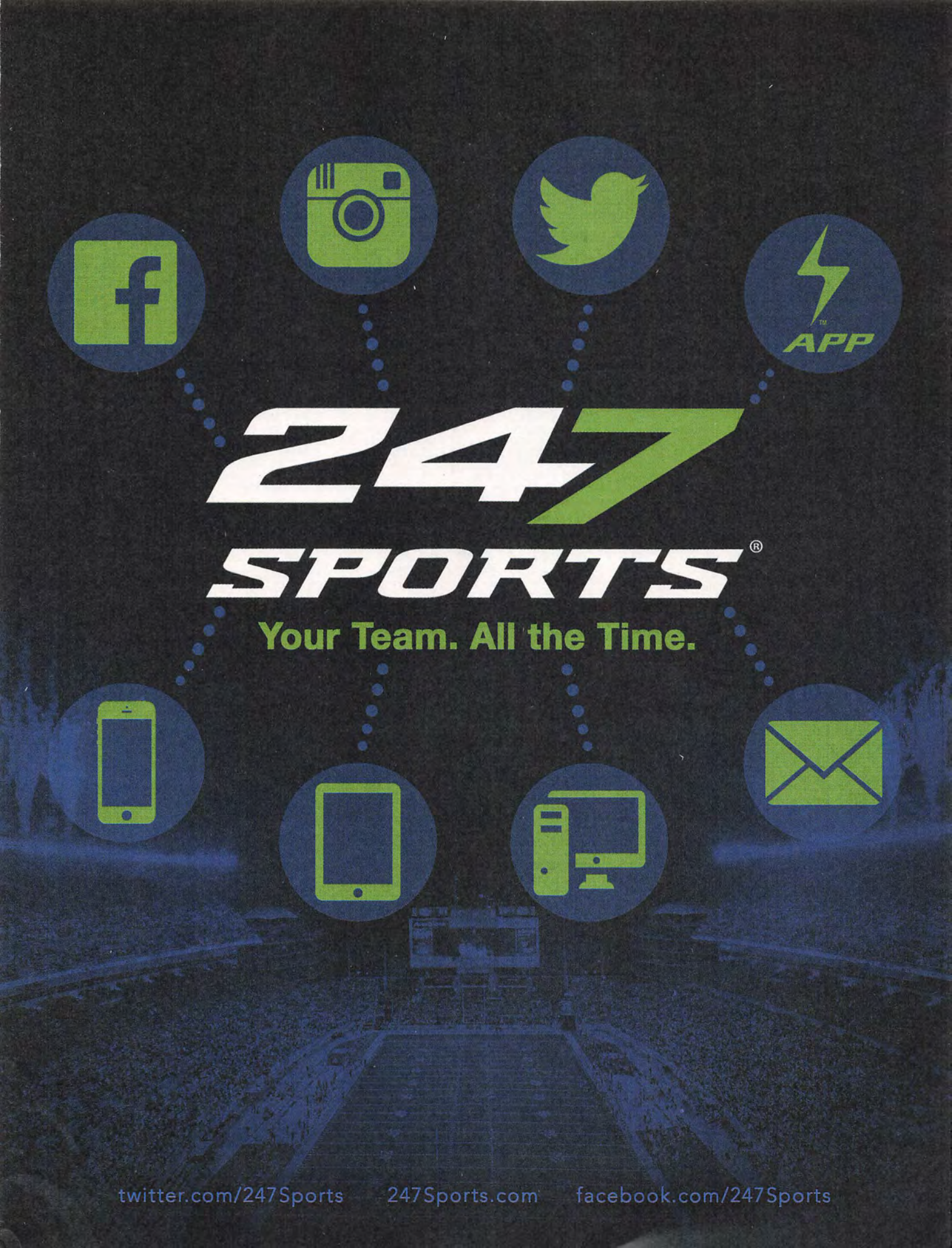
THE STANDINGS

ATLANTIC

Team	W-L	PCT.	PF	PA	W-L	PCT	PF	PA
Florida State	8-0	1.000	286	175	13-1	.929	472	358
Clemson	6-2	.750	204	142	10-3	.769	401	217
Louisville	5-3	.625	216	154	9-4	.692	405	283
Boston College	4-4	.500	183	174	7-6	.538	341	277
NC State	3-5	.375	197	250	8-5	.615	392	351
Wake Forest	1-7	.125	97	236	3-9	.250	178	317
Syracuse	1-7	.125	103	198	3-9	.250	205	292

COASTAL

Team	W-L	PCT.	PF	PA	W-L	PCT	PF	PA
Georgia Tech	6-2	.750	298	187	11-3	.786	530	360
Duke	5-3	.625	216	201	9-4	.692	421	283
North Carolina	4-4	.500	240	291	6-7	.462	432	507
Pittsburgh	4-4	.500	246	237	6-7	.462	414	342
Virginia Tech	3-5	.375	155	170	7-6	.538	313	262
Miami	3-5	.375	191	190	6-7	.462	380	316
Virginia	3-5	.375	167	194	5-7	.417	310	289


APP
247
SPORTS®
Your Team. All the Time.
twitter.com/247Sports
247Sports.com
facebook.com/247Sports

2015 ACC LEADERS

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

PASS EFFICIENCY	G	CMP	ATT	INT	PCT.	YDS	TD	EFFIC.
1. Brad Kaaya-Miami	13	221	378	12	58.5	3198	26	145.9
2. Jameis Winston-Florida State	13	305	467	18	65.3	3907	25	145.5
3. Chad Voytik-Pittsburgh	13	176	287	7	61.3	2233	16	140.2
4. Jacoby Brissett-NC State	13	221	370	5	59.7	2606	23	136.7
5. Marquise Williams-North Carolina	13	270	428	9	63.1	3068	21	135.3
6. Tyler Murphy-Boston College	13	131	230	10	57.0	1623	13	126.2
7. Cole Stoudt-Clemson	13	191	302	10	63.2	1892	9	119.1
8. Michael Brewer-Virginia Tech	13	262	441	15	59.4	2692	18	117.4
9. Anthony Boone-Duke	13	255	453	8	56.3	2700	19	116.7
10. Greyson Lambert-Virginia	10	154	261	11	59.0	1632	10	115.7

INTERCEPTIONS	G	NO.	YDS	TD	LONG	AVG/G
1. Gerod Holliman-Louisville	13	14	245	1	65	1.08
2. Josh Jones-NC State	12	4	37	0	36	0.33
3. James Sample-Louisville	13	4	36	0	24	0.31
4. Jamal Golden-Georgia Tech	14	4	87	1	85	0.29
D.J. White-Georgia Tech	14	4	48	1	48	0.29
6. Brian Walker-North Carolina	11	3	149	1	100	0.27
7. Maurice Canady-Virginia	12	3	69	1	69	0.25
Merrill Noel-Wake Forest	12	3	30	0	26	0.25
Quin Blanding-Virginia	12	3	6	0	6	0.25
Brandon Reddish-Syracuse	12	3	0	0	0	0.25

RUSHING	G	ATT	YDS	AVG.	TD	YDS/G
1. James Conner-Pittsburgh	13	298	1765	5.9	26	135.8
2. Duke Johnson-Miami	13	242	1652	6.8	10	127.1
3. Tyler Murphy-Boston College	13	181	1184	6.5	11	91.1
4. Justin Thomas-Georgia Tech	14	190	1086	5.7	8	77.6
5. Dalvin Cook-Florida State	13	170	1008	5.9	8	77.5
6. Zach Laskey-Georgia Tech	12	171	851	5.0	9	70.9
7. Shadrach Thornton-NC State	13	164	907	5.5	9	69.8
8. Jon Hilliman-Boston College	13	210	860	4.1	13	66.2
9. Synjyn Days-Georgia Tech	14	157	924	5.9	9	66.0
10. Kevin Parks-Virginia	12	189	745	3.9	4	62.1

SCORING	G	TD	FG	XPT	2XP	PTS	PTS/G
1. James Conner-Pittsburgh	13	26	0	0	0	156	12.0
2. Roberto Aguayo-Florida State	14	0	27	55	0	136	9.7
3. Ian Frye-Virginia	12	0	22	34	0	100	8.3
4. Ross Martin-Duke	13	0	19	50	0	107	8.2
5. Ammon Lakip-Clemson	13	0	21	43	0	106	8.2
6. Chris Blewitt-Pittsburgh	13	0	16	50	0	98	7.5
7. John Wallace-Louisville	13	0	15	50	0	95	7.3
8. Joey Slye-Virginia Tech	13	0	20	33	0	93	7.2
9. Harrison Butker-Georgia Tech	14	0	11	65	0	98	7.0
10. Michael Badgley-Miami	11	0	14	34	0	76	6.9

TOTAL OFFENSE	G	RUSH	PASS	PLAYS	TOT	YDS/G
1. Jameis Winston-Florida State	13	65	3907	524	3972	305.5
2. Marquise Williams-North Carolina	13	788	3068	621	3856	296.6
3. Jacoby Brissett-NC State	13	529	2606	494	3135	241.2
4. Anthony Boone-Duke	13	375	2700	547	3075	236.5
5. Brad Kaaya-Miami	13	-131	3198	405	3067	235.9
6. Tyler Murphy-Boston College	13	1184	1623	411	2807	215.9
7. Chad Voytik-Pittsburgh	13	466	2233	395	2699	207.6
8. Michael Brewer-Virginia Tech	13	-5	2692	521	2687	206.7
9. Justin Thomas-Georgia Tech	14	1086	1719	377	2805	200.4
10. Greyson Lambert-Virginia	10	-6	1632	296	1626	162.6

PUNTING	G	NO.	YDS	LG	AVG.
1. Wil Baumann-NC State	13	60	2724	67	45.4
2. Alexander Kinal-Wake Forest	12	81	3535	73	43.6
3. Will Monday-Duke	13	59	2537	65	43.0
4. Justin Vogel-Miami	13	52	2227	65	42.8
5. Bradley Pinion-Clemson	13	75	3194	60	42.6
6. Alex Howell-Boston College	13	65	2764	62	42.5
7. Alec Vozenilek-Virginia	12	58	2463	62	42.5
8. Riley Dixon-Syracuse	12	75	3182	60	42.4
9. Tommy Hibbard-North Carolina	12	64	2628	56	41.1
10. Cason Beatty-Florida State	14	48	1966	67	41.0

RECEIVING YDS/GAME	G	REC.	YDS	TD	AVG/G
1. Rashad Greene-Florida State	14	99	1365	7	97.5
2. Tyler Boyd-Pittsburgh	13	78	1261	8	97.0
3. Jamison Crowder-Duke	13	85	1044	6	80.3
4. Mike Williams-Clemson	13	57	1030	6	79.2
5. Artavis Scott-Clemson	13	76	965	8	74.2
6. Phillip Dorsett-Miami	13	36	871	10	67.0
7. DeAndre Smelter-Georgia Tech	12	35	715	7	59.6
8. Jarrod West-Syracuse	12	49	700	0	58.3
9. Ryan Switzer-North Carolina	13	61	757	4	58.2
10. Clive Walford-Miami	12	44	676	7	56.3

TEAM STATISTICS

TOTAL OFFENSE	G	PLAYS	YDS	AVG/P	TD	AVG/G
1. Georgia Tech	14	993	6671	6.7	66	476.5
2. Florida State	14	967	6179	6.4	53	441.4
3. Pittsburgh	13	918	5660	6.2	52	435.4
4. Miami	13	837	5594	6.7	45	430.3
5. North Carolina	13	1005	5587	5.6	55	429.8
6. NC State	13	889	5311	6.0	50	408.5
7. Clemson	13	990	5308	5.4	43	408.3
8. Duke	13	963	5178	5.4	47	398.3
9. Louisville	13	939	5131	5.5	49	394.7
10. Boston College	13	878	4992	5.7	44	384.0
11. Virginia	12	883	4490	5.1	31	374.2
12. Virginia Tech	13	962	4745	4.9	31	365.0
13. Syracuse	12	807	3959	4.9	18	329.9
14. Wake Forest	12	768	2595	3.4	16	216.2

TOTAL DEFENSE	G	PLAYS	YDS	AVG/P	TD	AVG/G
1. Clemson	13	841	3390	4.0	23	260.8
2. Louisville	13	844	4024	4.8	26	309.5
3. Boston College	13	822	4215	5.1	34	324.2
4. Miami	13	895	4285	4.8	35	329.6
5. Virginia Tech	13	868	4469	5.1	28	343.8
6. Syracuse	12	838	4190	5.0	28	349.2
7. Virginia	12	825	4238	5.1	30	353.2
8. Pittsburgh	13	837	4677	5.6	43	359.8
9. Wake Forest	12	849	4431	5.2	32	369.2
10. NC State	13	926	4850	5.2	40	373.1
11. Florida State	14	1008	5557	5.5	43	396.9
12. Duke	13	985	5196	5.3	33	399.7
13. Georgia Tech	14	911	5758	6.3	43	411.3
14. North Carolina	13	991	6472	6.5	64	497.8

KICKOFF RETURNS	G	NO	YDS	TD	AVG.
1. Boston College	13	35	910	1	26.0
2. Virginia	12	35	885	0	25.3
3. Duke	13	36	909	1	25.2
4. Pittsburgh	13	41	909	0	22.2
5. Georgia Tech	14	41	892	0	21.8
6. North Carolina	13	49	1046	0	21.3
7. Louisville	13	36	758	1	21.1
8. Miami	13	35	704	0	20.1
9. Florida State	14	49	971	0	19.8
10. Virginia Tech	13	37	702	0	19.0
11. Clemson	13	29	544	0	18.8
12. Wake Forest	12	36	664	0	18.4
13. NC State	13	36	658	0	18.3
14. Syracuse	12	35	637	0	18.2

SCORING OFFENSE	G	TD	FG	XPT	2XP	DXP	SAF	PTS	AVG
1. Georgia Tech	14	72	11	65	0	0	0	530	37.9
2. Florida State	14	56	27	55	0	0	0	472	33.7
3. North Carolina	13	60	6	52	1	0	0	432	33.2
4. Duke	13	52	19	50	0	0	1	421	32.4
5. Pittsburgh	13	52	16	50	0	0	2	414	31.8
6. Louisville	13	51	15	50	0	0	2	405	31.2
7. Clemson	13	48	21	46	0	0	2	401	30.8
8. NC State	13	51	12	46	2	0	0	392	30.2
9. Miami	13	47	18	40	1	0	1	380	29.2
10. Boston College	13	45	12	35	0	0	0	341	26.2
11. Virginia	12	35	22	34	0	0	0	310	25.8
12. Virginia Tech	13	36	20	33	1	0	1	313	24.1
13. Syracuse	12	22	17	20	0	0	1	205	17.1
14. Wake Forest	12	19	15	19	0	0	0	178	14.8

SCORING DEFENSE	G	TD	FG	XPT	2XP	DXP	SAF	PTS	AVG
1. Clemson	13	27	11	22	0	0	0	217	16.7
2. Virginia Tech	13	30	18	28	0	0	0	262	20.2
3. Boston College	13	34	13	34	0	0	0	277	21.3
4. Duke	13	34	17	28	0	0	0	283	21.8
Louisville	13	31	23	26	1	0	0	283	21.8
6. Virginia	12	36	13	34	0	0	0	289	24.1
7. Miami	13	40	13	37	0	0	0	316	24.3
8. Syracuse	12	33	19	31	1	0	2	292	24.3
9. Florida State	14	44	18	38	1	0	0	358	25.6
10. Georgia Tech	14	44	18	38	2	0	0	360	25.7
11. Pittsburgh	13	45	10	36	2	0	1	342	26.3
12. Wake Forest	12	38	18	35	0	0	0	317	26.4
13. NC State	13	44	15	42	0	0	0	351	27.0
14. North Carolina	13	67	12	61	1	0	3	507	39.0

PUNT RETURN AVG	G	NO	YDS	TD	AVG.
1. Duke	13	24	325	2	13.5
2. Florida State	14	17	179	0	10.5
3. Wake Forest	12	19	165	1	8.7
4. Syracuse	12	20	167	0	8.4
5. Georgia Tech	14	12	97	0	8.1
6. Boston College	13	16	125	0	7.8
7. Louisville	13	37	274	0	7.4
8. Pittsburgh	13	23	169	0	7.3
9. Virginia Tech	13	45	315	1	7.0
10. Miami	13	22	145	1	6.6
11. Clemson	13	35	199	1	5.7
12. North Carolina	13	38	173	0	4.6
13. Virginia	12	26	115	0	4.4
14. NC State	13	17	62	0	3.6

RUSHING OFFENSE	G	ATT	YDS	AVG.	TD	YDS/G
1. Georgia Tech	14	790	4789	6.1	47	342.1
2. Boston College	13	635	3311	5.2	31	254.7
3. Pittsburgh	13	610	3243	5.3	35	249.5
4. NC State	13	508	2659	5.2	26	204.5
5. Duke	13	492	2364	4.8	24	181.8
6. Miami	13	446	2345	5.3	19	180.4
7. North Carolina	13	496	1973	4.0	26	151.8
8. Virginia Tech	13	506	1919	3.8	12	147.6
9. Clemson	13	539	1904	3.5	20	146.5
10. Syracuse	12	424	1750	4.1	12	145.8
11. Louisville	13	511	1855	3.6	28	142.7
12. Florida State	14	451	1933	4.3	27	138.1
13. Virginia	12	451	1653	3.7	13	137.8
14. Wake Forest	12	383	479	1.3	4	39.9

RUSHING DEFENSE	G	ATT	YARDS	AVG.	TD	YDS/G
1. Boston College	13	399	1228	3.1	14	94.5
2. Clemson	13	453	1344	3.0	11	103.4
3. Louisville	13	434	1429	3.3	12	109.9
4. Virginia	12	431	1448	3.4	11	120.7
5. Miami	13	498	1797	3.6	21	138.2
6. Syracuse	12	493	1671	3.4	9	139.2
7. Virginia Tech	13	484	1882	3.9	15	144.8
8. Pittsburgh	13	465	2091	4.5	26	160.8
9. Georgia Tech	14	463	2346	5.1	24	167.6
10. NC State	13	521	2189	4.2	21	168.4
11. Florida State	14	573	2382	4.2	21	170.1
12. Wake Forest	12	501	2192	4.4	20	182.7
13. Duke	13	564	2508	4.4	19	192.9
14. North Carolina	13	599	3126	5.2	33	240.5

PUNTING	G	NO	YDS	AVG/P	RET	AVG	TB	NET/P
1. Wake Forest	12	81	3535	43.6	89	1.1	0	42.5
2. Miami	13	52	2227	42.8	101	1.9	1	40.5
3. NC State	13	60	2724	45.4	217	3.6	4	40.5
4. Duke	13	59	2537	43.0	33	0.6	8	39.7
5. Clemson	13	78	3306	42.4	174	2.2	2	39.6
6. North Carolina	13	69	2784	40.3	58	0.8	3	38.6
7. Florida State	14	48	1966	41.0	92	1.9	2	38.2
8. Boston College	13	66	2764	41.9	181	2.7	4	37.9
9. Virginia Tech	13	83	3314	39.9	89	1.1	4	37.9
10. Pittsburgh	13	50	2003	40.1	66	1.3	4	37.1
11. Syracuse	12	76	3182	41.9	329	4.3	4	36.5
12. Georgia Tech	14	32	1285	40.2	105	3.3	2	35.6
13. Louisville	13	73	2909	39.8	301	4.1	5	34.4
14. Virginia	12	62	2500	40.3	252	4.1	8	33.7

PASS OFFENSE	G	COMP	ATT	INT	PCT.	YDS	AVG.	TD	AVG/G
1. Florida State	14	330	516	20	64.0	4246	8.2	26	303.3
2. North Carolina	13	315	509	13	61.9	3614	7.1	29	278.0
3. Clemson	13	292	451	12	64.7	3404	7.5	23	261.8
4. Louisville	13	237	428	10	55.4	3276	7.7	21	252.0
5. Miami	13	227	391	12	58.1	3249	8.3	26	249.9
6. Virginia	12	248	432	16	57.4	2837	6.6	18	236.4
7. Virginia Tech	13	271	456	15	59.4	2826	6.2	19	217.4
8. Duke	13	268	471	8	56.9	2814	6.0	23	216.5
9. NC State	13	224	381	6	58.8	2652	7.0	24	204.0
10. Pittsburgh	13	188	308	7	61.0	2417	7.8	17	185.9
11. Syracuse	12	207	383	17	54.0	2209	5.8	6	184.1
12. Wake Forest	12	225	385	14	58.4	2116	5.5	12	176.3
13. Georgia Tech	14	106	203	6	52.2	1882	9.3	19	134.4
14. Boston College	13	135	243	10	55.6	1681	6.9	13	129.3

PASS DEFENSE	G	COMP	ATT	INT	PCT.	YDS	AVG.	TD	AVG/G
1. Clemson	13	194	388	12	50.0	2046	5.3	12	157.4
2. Wake Forest	12	211	348	6	60.6	2239	6.4	12	186.6
3. Miami	13	229	397	10	57.7	2488	6.3	14	191.4
4. Pittsburgh	13	199	372	10	53.5	2586	7.0	17	198.9
5. Virginia Tech	13	183	384	12	47.7	2587	6.7	13	199.0
6. Louisville	13	221	410	26	53.9	2595	6.3	14	199.6
7. NC State	13	226	405	10	55.8	2661	6.6	19	204.7
8. Duke	13	235	421	11	55.8	2688	6.4	14	206.8
9. Syracuse	12	225	345	8	65.2	2519	7.3	19	209.9
10. Florida State	14	248	435	14	57.0	3175	7.3	22	226.8
11. Boston College	13	264	423	9	62.4	2987	7.1	20	229.8
12. Virginia	12	218	394	15	55.3	2790	7.1	19	232.5
13. Georgia Tech	14	282	448	18	62.9	3412	7.6	19	243.7
14. North Carolina	13	230	392	12	58.7	3346	8.5	31	257.4

TURNOVER MARGIN	G	+FUM	+INT	TOT	FUM	-INT	-TOT	-MAR
1. Georgia Tech	14	11	18	29	12	6	18	+11
2. Duke	13	10	11	21	7	8	15	+6
Clemson	13	12	12	24	6	12	18	+6
4. Virginia	12	14	15	29	8	16	24	+5
5. NC State	13	10	10	20	9	6	15	+5
6. Louisville	13	4	26	30	16	10	26	+4
7. Boston College	13	5	9	14	3	10	13	+1
8. North Carolina	13	11	12	23	10	13	23	+0
9. Miami	13	13	10	23	12	12	24	-1
10. Syracuse	12	12	8	20	4	17	21	-1
11. Wake Forest	12	13	6	19	7	14	21	-2
12. Virginia Tech	13	10	12	22	11	15	26	-4
13. Pittsburgh	13	4	10	14	12	7	19	-5
14. Florida State	14	12	14	26	12	20	32	-6

Lindy's SPORTS

Order Online
www.lindyssports.com

FOOTBALL ANNUALS

❑ NATIONAL COLLEGE ❑ SEC ❑ ACC ❑ BIG 10 ❑ BIG 12 ❑ MOUNTAIN WEST
❑ PRO FOOTBALL ❑ PRO FANTASY ❑ NFL DRAFT GUIDE

IN THE HUDDLE ANNUALS

❑ ALABAMA ❑ TEXAS ❑ OHIO STATE

BASEBALL

❑ FANTASY ❑ PREVIEW

BASKETBALL

❑ COLLEGE ❑ PRO

SPECIAL ISSUES

❑ WORLD SERIES ❑ NFL WORLD CHAMPIONS ❑ NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

INDIVIDUAL COPIES..... (Includes Shipping) $10.50
IN THE HUDDLE INDIVIDUAL COPIES ..... (Includes Shipping) $12.50
BACK ISSUES ..... (Includes Shipping) $12.50

COMPLETE FOOTBALL SET (7 MAGAZINES) — IN SLIP CASE (EXCLUDES FANTASY & DRAFT).... $57.00

CANADIAN ORDERS ADD	INDIVIDUAL $14.95	SETS $27.95
MEXICO ORDERS ADD	INDIVIDUAL $14.95	SETS $46.95
OVERSEAS ORDERS ADD	INDIVIDUAL $18.95	SETS $46.95

(INTERNATIONAL ORDERS SHIP SURFACE - 4-6 WEEKS)

SPECIAL OFFERS

- ALL 19 MAGAZINES ..... (Includes Shipping) $116.25
- 10 MAGAZINES ..... (Includes Shipping) $70.00
- 5 MAGAZINES ..... (Includes Shipping) $40.00

SLIPCASE NOT INCLUDED

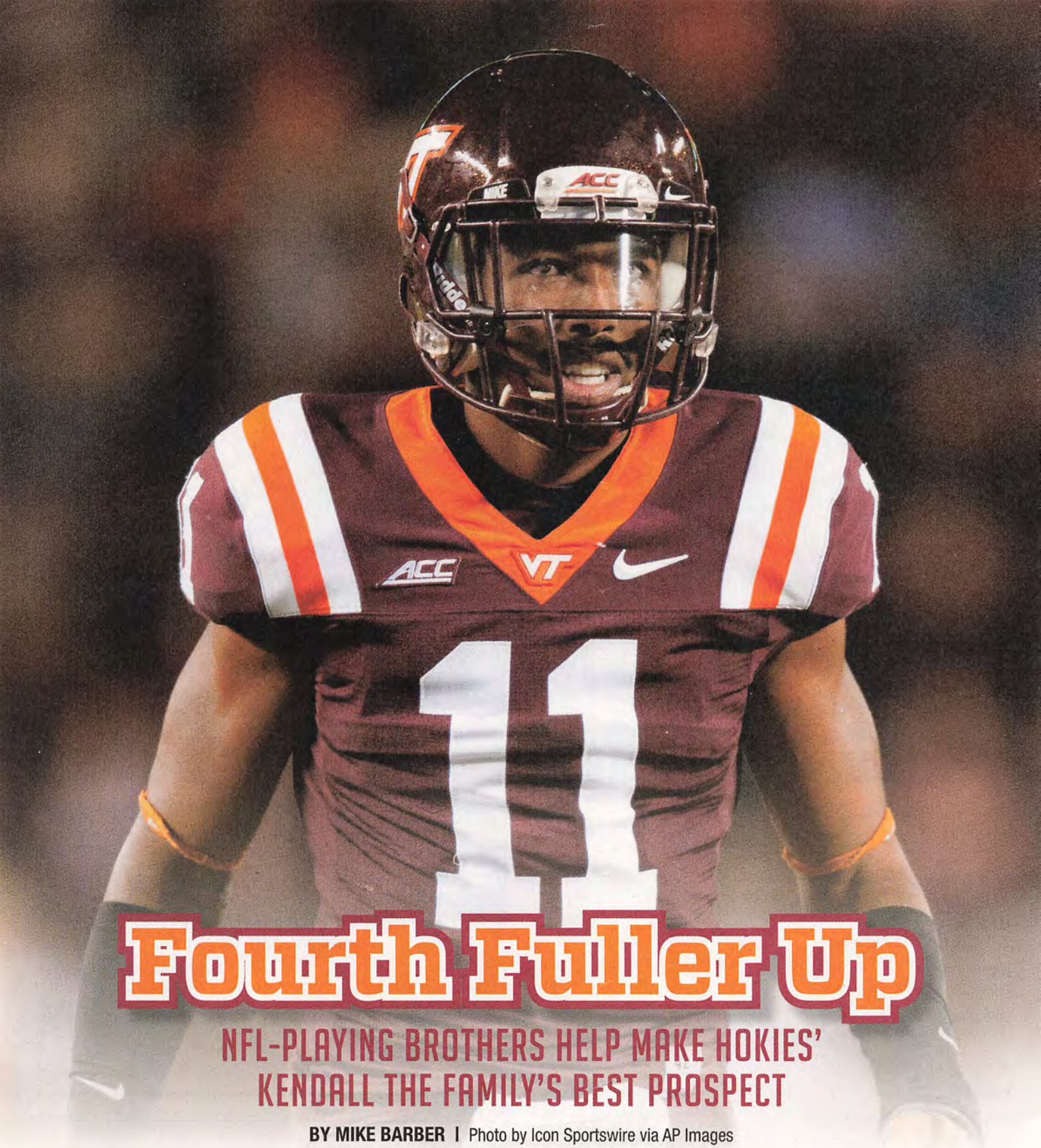
DOMESTIC ORDERS ONLY

Alabama Residents Add 9% Sales Tax

LINDY'S SPORTS ANNUALS
2100 CENTENNIAL DR. SUITE 100
BIRMINGHAM, AL 35216
PHONE: 205-871-1182 / FAX: 205-871-1184

COPIES ACCEPTED

NAME _____
COMPANY _____
STREET ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
TELEPHONE _____
E-MAIL _____
❑ CHECK OR MONEY ORDER ENCLOSED
PLEASE CHARGE: ❑ VISA ❑ MASTER CARD ❑ DISCOVER ❑ AMERICAN EXPRESS
ACCOUNT # _____ EXP. _____
SIGNATURE _____



Fourth Fuller Up

NFL-PLAYING BROTHERS HELP MAKE HOKIES' KENDALL THE FAMILY'S BEST PROSPECT

BY MIKE BARBER | Photo by Icon Sportswire via AP Images

Growing up in Baltimore, Kendall Fuller came out on the short end of many athletic competitions with his three older brothers, as one might expect considering all older brothers ended up in the NFL.

"The only thing I won at was video games," said Fuller, 20, a junior cornerback at Virginia Tech, his brothers' alma mater. "Other than that, I lost at everything."

His older brothers said they didn't have to go out of their way to provoke competitions with Kendall. He sought it out from an early age.

"I don't think we purposely picked on him," Corey Fuller, 24, said this offseason. "But it was in Kendall's nature to want to compete against us."

Corey, now a wide receiver with the Detroit Lions, recalled playing pick-up games back home with Kyle, 23, who is now

a cornerback for the Chicago Bears. Kendall would jump into those games, he said.

"He was out there just playing," Corey said. "Nobody else knew he wasn't our age or anything. He was different. He was the youngest one out there and he was really competing."

The sibling rivalry hasn't died down any over the years. When the Fullers are back in Baltimore, they often hold foot races to see who's still the man of the house.

A couple of years ago, Kendall and Kyle went bowling in Virginia. Corey went bowling, too, but he was in Michigan. They compared scores by phone.

"If one of us does something and one of us thinks we're really good at it, everybody else will go do it and be like, 'I got this score, I did this, I did that,'" Corey said.

Oldest brother Vincent, 32, played five years for the Tennessee Titans. With three of the Fuller boys good enough athletes to get paid to play football, assumption has always been that Kendall will be, too. In fact, some pro scouts and NFL draft analysts indicate that little brother just might be the best prospect of the family.

That's good news for Virginia Tech, because before Fuller can play in The League, he's got to play a full season full of high expectations for the Hokies in the Atlantic Coast Conference.

Fuller (6-0, 197) wasted no time on campus showing why expectations surrounding him are so high. He started as a freshman in 2013, earning second-team All-ACC honors and winning the league's defensive Rookie of the Year award.

"I don't think the success surprised me," he said. "I think any athlete who steps on the field expects to succeed. But going in, you don't know how much playing time you're going to get."

Fuller got plenty. He played in all 13 games, starting 12, including his college debut against, *gulp*, Alabama. He finished the season with 58 tackles, six interceptions and 17 passes defended.

Last season, playing most of the year with a broken left wrist, Fuller was a first-team all-league pick and an All-American.

The broken wrist had a slight effect on his sophomore season numbers, when compared to his freshman year. Fuller finished 2014 with 54 tackles, two interceptions and, again, 17 passes defended.

"I think it just kind of took a little bit of physicality away, just being kind of hesitant with it," Fuller said of the broken wrist. "Any injury is frustrating, but you've got to find ways to fight through it, help your team."

One of the ways to fight through it was by being using his head.

"Mentally, he continues to progress and be as smart an IQ football player that I've coached," Tech defensive backs coach Torrian Gray said before the Hokies' Military Bowl win over Cincinnati. "Physically, he wasn't as healthy as he was his freshman year, so the interceptions and some of those things, the numbers weren't as great. Hopefully, we'll get all that shored up and have an even better next (season)."

Neither Fuller nor fellow sophomore cornerback Brandon Facyson practiced in the spring for the Hokies, who went 7-6 in 2014. While Fuller is expected to be full speed in the fall, there are lingering questions about Facyson's recovery from a broken leg late last season that required surgery.

Tech spent the spring working junior Chuck Clark and sophomore Greg Stroman at corner in case Facyson isn't back to the form he flashed when he started along with Fuller as rookies in 2013.

"It's all musical chairs," Gray said. "You kind of have got contingency plans in different ways."

Facyson played in 12 games in 2013, starting nine, had five interceptions and earned third-team All-ACC honors, but he injured the same leg that that he would later break in 2014.

"He wasn't the same guy," Hokies defensive coordinator Bud Foster said about Facyson's 2014 season. "We want to get that guy back."

With a healthy Fuller and Facyson at each corner, Tech could move Clark or Riley to nickel back or safety.

"As long as we can keep everybody healthy, get everybody healthy, we'll definitely have a strong secondary," Fuller said.

Fuller worked in the offseason to rehab his wrist, and he said doctors cleared him "to do anything that feels comfortable."

"There are some things in the weight room I can do, and some things I might not have the flexibility in my wrist to do," Fuller added in the offseason.

Fuller should be full speed by the time fall camp opens. He adds that he's given no thought yet to whether this season could be his last in college, whether he'd leave Tech a year early. NFLDraftScout.com projects Fuller safely into the 2016 first round as he heads into his junior year.

Kendall enjoyed watching Corey and Kyle go head-to-head in the NFL twice last season, but insisted he's in no rush to join that part of the sibling rivalry.

"I think I can get a lot better," Fuller said. "There were just some little things I did last year I can learn from, can help me improve my game."

Kendall Fuller looks on during the Orange-Maroon spring game.

Photo by Michael Shroyer-USA TODAY Sports

FULLER FAMILY HIGHLIGHTS

The four Fuller brothers at Virginia Tech:

DB VINCENT FULLER (2002-04)

Intercepted eight passes while playing cornerback and free safety. Also returned two fumbles for touchdowns and made 142 total tackles. Earned honorable mention all-conference honors for Tech's 2004 ACC title team.

WR COREY FULLER (2011-12)

Sat out 2010 after his transfer from Kansas. Didn't play much as a junior, but then caught 43 passes for 815 yards and six touchdowns as a senior.

CB KYLE FULLER (2010-13)

The four-year starter was a second-team All-American as a senior, and earned some sort of all-conference honor in each of his final three seasons. Had six career interceptions and 23.5 tackles for loss before becoming the 14th overall pick of the 2014 draft.

CB KENDALL FULLER (2013-14)

Has intercepted eight passes and broken up 26 other throws in two seasons. Earned 2014 first-team All-America honors, as chosen by the Walter Camp Football Foundation and the Football Writers of America.

READY FOR LAUNCH

CLEMSON QB WATSON OVERCOMING ADVERSITY ON ROAD TO STARDOM

BY BRAD SENKIW | Photo by Joshua S. Kelly-USA TODAY Sports

Clemson coach Dabo Swinney has seen his share of players overcome the physical and mental hurdles of torn knee ligaments.

No athlete, however, compares to Deshaun Watson, the Tigers sophomore quarterback who is on the brink of becoming a college football star.

"The player has to do his part," Swinney said.

"That sometimes doesn't get talked about. The player really has to buy into the process and the things that you've got to do to get better. Deshaun is to the nth degree in anything and everything you ask him to do. His rehab is no different. That's why he's responded so well."

Watson injured his knee against Georgia Tech, returned six weeks later to beat rival South Carolina on one leg in the regular-season finale, and then skipped the Russell Athletic Bowl to have December knee surgery.

Two months later, Swinney called Watson a physical "freak" because the head coach

couldn't get over how quickly Watson regained his athletic form.

"I've been in the training room watching him rehab and seen what's he's done," Clemson junior receiver Mike Williams said. "It was unbelievable."

The mental fortitude that it takes to have a quick recovery is no surprise to Watson, who sat out spring drills.

A major knee injury doesn't rate high on his adversity scale. Watson's mother, Deann, was diagnosed with cancer when he was a sophomore in high school. That forced him to grow up quickly and be the man of the house.

"I've handled (adversity) in my life before," Watson said.

"I just go out there and not take every day for granted and try to get better. Being knocked down and trying to stay healthy and moving forward is something that I can relate to."

And it's something Swinney saw Watson carry over to the football field.

"I've never been around a guy so mature at that stage as far as just understanding of the big picture," Swinney said.

"He's literally like talking to a coach. He just gets it at a level that no freshman I've been around ever has. Also, things that he's dealt with off the field in his personal life with his mom and all those type of things have really focused him and given him this drive that sometimes people don't always have until maybe a little bit later in their career."

All of this has Clemson — and Watson — believing that he'll be 100 percent healthy when the Tigers kick off the 2015 season. Clemson has a lot riding on this rising star.

Watson (6-2, 205) has been dubbed the most talented returning quarterback in the ACC and a legitimate Heisman Trophy contender. He has had to become a leader and the face of a proud program that hasn't won a national title since 1981.

The attention doesn't seem to faze him at all.

"I think he has a real sense of urgency, and he has a real appreciation of just the platform that he has, the opportunity that he has. He just gets it," Swinney said.

"He understands what he represents and what comes with that. He knows there's going to be failure and success, and he does a great job keeping all that stuff at an even keel."

The brilliance Watson demonstrated in his truncated freshman season, combined with a talented group of skill players, has Clemson hoping to take down Florida State and win its first ACC title since 2011. And these days, such a conference championship could also spell a trip to the College Football Playoff.

"I have talent all around me," Watson said. "My job is to get them the ball and let them do the rest."

Watson's 2014 eight-game stat line is impressive: 67.9 percent completion rate, 1,466 passing yards, 14 passing touchdowns, only two interceptions, five rushing scores, and a passing efficiency rating of 188.6, which would have led the country if he had appeared in enough games to qualify for the NCAA stats.

It was clear out of the gate that the five-star recruit out of Gainesville, Ga. — he was rated the top dual-threat quarterback in the country by 247Sports — was more than just a paper prospect. His first career completion went for 29 yards in the season opener at Georgia. His next pass threaded the needle between two defenders for a 30-yard touchdown strike.

After nearly leading Clemson off the bench to a huge upset in an overtime loss at Florida State, Watson threw for 435 yards and a school-record six touchdowns in his first career start, a 50-35 victory over North Carolina.

Against NC State a week later, he threw for 267 yards, was responsible for four total touchdowns and led the team in rushing in a 41-0 rout.

All signs pointed to a special, unforgettable freshman season until it was derailed in his third start when he injured a finger against Louisville that kept him out for three games.

His return was short-lived. Watson sprained his knee in the first quarter against Georgia Tech, didn't return to the game in a 28-6 loss and tore his ACL in practice the following week.

Playing on a bum knee in his last game of 2014, he threw for 269 yards and two touchdowns and rushed for two more scores to beat the Gamecocks, 35-17, and end a five-game losing skid in the series.

Clemson was simply a different team with him on the field in 2014, but he was still just a freshman. Swinney expects to see great improvement in all aspects of Watson's game.

He is perhaps the greatest X-factor in college football. He could be the face of a team that has the talent to play in the College Football Playoff ... or he could be a mere mortal who is not able to ramp up to full speed so quickly after a knee injury.

One sportsbook pegged his Heisman odds at 20-1 in May.

"The biggest thing is, let's play all year, hopefully get a little lucky and be able to avoid some of those little injuries," Swinney said.

"Mentally, just execute at a higher level. I thought he did a great job for us last year, but playing faster (is a goal) because he's so much more confident. This time last year he hadn't done it. It ought to look like he's won big games."

Watson works out with the team during spring practices.

Photo by Joshua S. Kelly-USA TODAY Sports

DESHAUN'S DEEDS

How Deshaun Watson fared in the games in which he played the most last season:

Date	Opponent	Comp.	Att.	Yards	TD	INT	Eff.	Rush Yds
Sept. 20	Florida State	19	28	266	0	0	147.66	36
Sept. 27	North Carolina	27	36	435	6	1	225.94	47
Oct. 4	NC State	17	29	267	2	0	158.72	83
Nov. 29	South Carolina	14	19	269	2	0	227.35	13

BOSTON COLLEGE EAGLES

For more coverage of the Eagles, visit bostoncollege.247Sports.com

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Todd Fitch **DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR:** Don Brown **STADIUM:** Alumni Stadium: 44,500

ADDAZIO REBUILDING EAGLES WITH TALENTED, YOUTHFUL ROSTER

Boston College's 2014 season was up and down.

The Eagles beat a top 10 team for the first time in more than a decade when, riding the legs of transfer quarterback Tyler Murphy, they defeated visiting USC. But they also lost on a last-second play to Colorado State.

They gave Florida State all they could handle ... but then fell apart defensively and offensively in the final minutes.

And then there was the kicking game, which cost Boston College the Pinstripe Bowl when freshman Mike Knoll missed an extra point attempt, one of seven that BC kickers missed last season.

After the bowl game, coach Steve Addazio talked about building up the youth as part of the rebuilding process.

"The next step for our program has to be to develop and mature ... and create different outcomes (in close games)," Addazio said. "It's frustrating. We've got to go get that done."

The youth already became an issue for Boston College in the offseason, as Addazio had to cancel the team's spring game due to concerns over the lack of depth along the offensive line. The Eagles had only seven healthy bodies there during the spring.

Addazio has done well to go 14-12 in his first two seasons, but things are not going to be easy this year for the Eagles, who were in seven games last season decided by a touchdown or less (going 3-4). Addazio will be faced with basically his third completely new lineup in three years. The Eagles have had three quarterbacks over that time, three different sets of offensive tackles, and a secondary filled with mostly unfamiliar faces.

BC also has new coordinators on special teams and offense.

"Obviously, we're breaking in a new offensive line," Addazio said. "We're breaking in a new quarterback and several other key positions, but there's a lot of young talent."

OFFENSE

Boston College has a new play-caller. Todd Fitch takes over as offensive coordinator after Ryan Day left to become the quarterbacks coach for the Philadelphia Eagles.

Boston College also has a new quarterback.

Darius Wade is in the lead to be the new starter, but Addazio and Fitch will let true freshman Elijah Robinson and sophomore Troy Flutie (Doug's nephew) compete into fall camp. Wade saw limited action last season behind Tyler Murphy, throwing eight passes, but it does give him a little edge in experience.

"He's starting to get a good handle on the offense," Addazio said of Wade. "He throws the ball extremely well. He's very deceptive. He has outstanding quickness and athletic ability."

Boston College will have many weapons in the backfield, anchored by sophomore Jon Hilliman (860 rushing yards, 13 TDs), and supported by junior Myles Willis (459 yards) and sophomore Marcus Outlow (243 yards).

The wide receiver position looks like a question mark.

The only returning receiver of note is Sherman Alston, a lightning fast, yet undersized sophomore who made 16 catches last season.

Also coming back will be receiver Bobby Swigert, who hasn't played a down since 2012 after he tore up his knee against Notre Dame. He has had 11 surgeries on his knee since the initial injury. Senior wideout Harrison Jackson, who had a couple of starts in 2013, will be returning from an injury that sidelined him last season.

There are a few intriguing young weapons for the offense here, with freshman Nolan Borgersen and sophomore Nat Dixon looking to crack the two-deep this fall.

The line is going to be almost completely revamped. Harris Williams, a graduate student, returns to the Heights after losing 2014 to a knee injury in Week One. He was expected to be one of the best linemen on the team last year; his return should be a huge boost for a young group.

Senior left tackle Dave Bowen played a lot last season in BC's jumbo formations, but he will take on much more playing time and responsibility this season. The Eagles figure to replace All-ACC center Andy

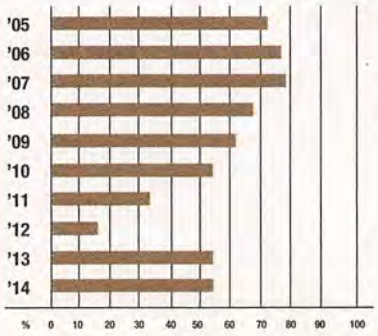
SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	'14 Record
Sept. 5	MAINE	5-6
Sept. 12	HOWARD	5-7
Sept. 18	FLORIDA STATE	13-1
Sept. 26	NORTHERN ILLINOIS	11-3
Oct. 3	at Duke	9-4
Oct. 10	WAKE FOREST	3-9
Oct. 17	at Clemson	10-3
Oct. 24	at Louisville	9-4
Oct. 31	VIRGINIA TECH	7-6
Nov. 7	NC STATE	8-5
Nov. 21	vs. Notre Dame (Fenway Park)	8-5
Nov. 28	at Syracuse	3-9

RESULTS

	7-6, 4-4	
W	at Massachusetts	30-7
L	PITTSBURGH	20-30
W	USC	37-31
W	MAINE	40-10
L	COLORADO STATE	21-24
W	at NC State	30-14
L	CLEMSON	13-17
W	at Wake Forest	23-17
W	at Virginia Tech	33-31
L	LOUISVILLE	19-38
L	at Florida State	17-20
W	SYRACUSE	28-7
	Pinstripe Bowl	
L	vs. Penn State (OT)	30-31

10-YEAR WINNING TREND



AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:
Chestnut Hill, Mass.

2014:
7-6 overall, 4-4 ACC (4th, Atlantic)

COACH:
Steve Addazio — At Boston College: 14-12, 2 years; overall: 27-23, 4 years

RETURNING STARTERS:
10; 2 offense, 6 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH:
QB Darius Wade, RB Jon Hilliman, RB Myles Willis, WR Sherman Alston, RG Harris Williams, DT Truman Gutapfel, DE Kevin Kavalec

PRIMARY STRENGTHS:
Boston College has an impressive array of running backs that can beat foes in a variety of ways. Hilliman is a physical back who continues to get stronger; Willis and Marcus Outlow are solid backs with decent hands; Tyler Rouse also plans to get some touches. That stable of backs is important for a run-heavy team.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS:
BC lacks experience at key positions, especially the offensive line, which definitely doesn't have the veteran vibe it has had in past seasons. The secondary is filled with question marks.

KEY LOSSES:
QB Tyler Murphy, WR Josh Bordner, C Andy Gallik, T Ian Silberman, DE Brian Mihalik, LB Josh Keyes, CB Manny Asprilla

OVERVIEW:
Boston College faces plenty of questions, but Addazio has proven adept at maximizing his talent and overhauling his offensive game plan to tailor his talent. It looks like he will have to do that again in Year 3 with a dual-threat quarterback who is more of a threat with his arm than his legs.

KEY NUMBER:
2 Boston College had the second-ranked rushing defense in the country last season.

DL
Connor
WUJCIAK

Photo by Tomasso DeRosa

RB

JON HILLIMAN

Photo by RD Moore

SCOUTING REPORT: Offense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
QB	Darius Wade	So.	More of a traditional passer than Tyler Murphy was for BC.	Troy Flutie, So.
RB	**Jon Hilliman***	So.	Explosive running back who isn't afraid of contact.	Marcus Outlow, So.
RB	Myles Willis	Jr.	Not particularly physical, but he's dangerous in open field.	Tyler Rouse, Jr.
WR	Thadd Smith	So.	Very quick and is gaining chemistry with QB Wade.	Harrison Jackson, Sr.
WR	Sherman Alston	So.	Undersized, but elite speed; great on screens and end-arounds.	Charlie Callinan, So.
TE	**Mike Giacone***	Sr.	Not much of a pass-catcher; makes up for it with blocking.	Louie Addazio, Sr.
LT	Dave Bowen	Sr.	Hasn't started, but he does have solid game experience.	James Hendren, So.
LG	Jon Baker	So.	Struggled as a freshman, but experience helped maturation.	Chris Lindstrom, Fr.
C	Frank Taylor	Jr.	Saw action in 12 games last year, seeking first career start.	Joel Rich, Jr.
RG	Harris Williams	Sr.	Returns from injury; fits right in with power-running scheme.	Austin Stevens, So.
RT	Jim Cashman	Sr.	Has gained experience on special teams.	Sam Schmal, So.
PK	**Mike Knoll***	So.	Inconsistent as a freshman; didn't always get help from holder.	Alex Howell, Sr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

SCOUTING REPORT: Defense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
DE	**Kevin Kavalec***	Jr.	Strong pass rusher and getting better every year.	Harold Landry, So.
DT	**Truman Gutapfel***	Jr.	Uses strength and wrestling skills to be stout run stopper.	Mehdi Abdesmad, Sr.
DT	**Connor Wujciak***	Sr.	Knows how to break down an offensive line to rush passer.	Noa Merritt, So.
DE	Malachi Moore	Sr.	Came into own in 2014; could become a strong pass rusher.	**Mike Strizak, Sr.***
LB	Matt Milano	Jr.	A LB/S hybrid who is used all over the field.	Christian Lezzer, So.
LB	**Steven Daniels***	Sr.	Strong and physical, but not overly quick.	Tim Joy, Sr.
LB	Connor Strachan	So.	Good pass rushing LB, saw some playing time last season.	Ty Schwab, So.
CB	John Johnson	Jr.	Physical cornerback who developed nicely in 2014.	Kamrin Moore, So.
CB	**Justin Simmons***	Sr.	Converted safety is physical; coverage skills could be a question.	Isaac Yiadom, So.
SS	Cam Seward	So.	Saw limited playing time in 2014.	Atem Ntantang, So.
FS	Christian Lezzer	So.	Converted linebacker moves well around the field.	Allen Dawson, So.
P	**Alex Howell***	Sr.	Consistent punter who does all things well.	Mike Knoll, So.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

Gallik with junior Frank Taylor. Younger linemen such as Jon Baker, Chris Lindstrom and James Hendren look to compete for time and fill roles.

Addazio believes the talent is there on the line, but it might take a while to jell.

"I believe we'll be just fine up front," he said. "We may suffer a little early from the youth, especially at a position which takes time to develop, but I really couldn't be more excited about the talent level of what's coming in up front for the future."

DEFENSE

Boston College should have one of the most talented front sevens in the ACC.

Connor Wujciak and Truman Gutapfel give the Eagles two massive tackles. They were fantastic against the run in 2014, helping BC finish second in the country in rushing defense. They will be joined by senior Mehdi Abdesmad, who has shown glimpses of excellence up the middle, but has battled season-ending injuries over the past two years.

Kevin Kavalec and Malachi Moore could be two of the better defensive ends BC has seen in years. Coordinator Don Brown's defensive scheme is blitz heavy, which resulted in BC finishing 35th in the country in sacks. Watch for sophomore defensive end Harold Landry, a four-star recruit, to have a breakout season.

Boston College needs to replace linebacker Josh Keyes, and it could be an underclassmen filling that role. Sophomore Connor Strachan and Kevin Bletzer got playing time in 2014 but could take a big step forward this season. Steven Daniels and Tim Joy are upperclassmen who are solid against the run.

In the secondary, Boston College will be relying on senior Justin Simmons to be a physical presence at safety or cornerback. Sophomore Isaac Yiadom could also see playing time at cornerback, along with junior John Johnson, who filled in nicely in 2014 after an injury forced him into the starting role.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Special teams was one of BC's biggest weaknesses in 2014, and Addazio replaced his special teams coordinator with Florida assistant Coleman Hutzler.

Mike Knoll should still be the main placekicker this season, and the Eagles are hoping for consistency at the position after three kickers last season combined to miss eight PATs, the most of any team in the country.

"Mike has worked real hard, and he's got all the right leg strength, etc.," Addazio said. "It's got to be accuracy, and it's got to be reliability. All we can hope that is with another year, with more experience, that that situation will improve."

Senior Alex Howell returns after averaging

NOTEBOOK

Bobby Swigert will be someone to watch this season, although what Boston College can expect from him is anyone's guess.

Just the fact that he is back on the football field is a miracle.

Swigert came to the Eagles in 2010, when he burst onto the scene, grabbing 34 catches for 504 yards. He continued his success in 2011 and 2012, catching more than 70 passes and becoming a trusted target for quarterback **Chase Rettig** during the one-and-a-half seasons when he started.

And then his 2012 season was tragically cut short.

Swigert suffered a devastating knee injury. All but one tendon in his knee was completely ripped. A full recovery after surgery was expected, but things got worse.

Doctors found a staph infection in his knee and had to go back multiple times to fix the knee, forcing Swigert to miss the 2013 and 2014 seasons. But after 11 surgeries ... Swigert is back.

He was still taking it slow, but he did practice during spring ball, wearing a red no-contact jersey. Coach **Steve Addazio** has said that he plans on continuing to bring Swigert back slowly, and, really, anything he can do for the team is a bonus at this point.

But for a position short on experience, he could make a difference for the Eagles in 2015.

• Tight end **Dan Crimmins**, converted from wide receiver, was no longer with the team as of late May. He made 25 catches for 305 yards last season; both figures ranked second on the team. So, an inexperienced group of pass-catchers got even younger.

• A young secondary figures to be a question mark, but Addazio said that group played well during spring ball. "I thought the defensive backs — we have new DBs, but a lot of those DBs have played a lot of football," he said. "We're more athletic. We've got a good amount of experience back there."

• Boston College had three players selected in the NFL Draft — OL **Ian Silberman** (sixth round, No. 190 overall), C **Andy Gallik** (sixth, 208) and DE **Brian Mihalik** (seventh, 237).

EAGLES SPRING ROSTER

Quarterbacks	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
16 Troy Flutie	QB	6-0	182	So.	Natick
15 Elijah Robinson	QB	6-2	185	Fr.	Montclair, NJ
4 Darius Wade	QB	6-0	201	So.	Middletown, DE
Running Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
32 Jon Hilliman	RB	6-0	215	So.	Plainfield, NJ
7 Marcus Outlow	RB	5-10	207	So.	Norwich, CT
35 Tyler Rouse	RB	5-8	194	Jr.	Baldwinsville, NY
23 Myles Willis	RB	5-9	203	Jr.	Conyers, GA
39 Sean Burke	FB	5-11	234	Sr.	Lansdale, PA
61 A.J. Caruso	FB	6-1	220	Sr.	West Allenhurst, NJ
38 Richard Wilson	FB	5-10	212	So.	Southfield, MI
36 Bobby Wolford	FB	6-2	248	Sr.	Jacksonville, FL
Wide Receivers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
6 Sherman Alston	WR	5-6	163	So.	Harlem, NY
80 Drew Barksdale	WR	5-11	195	Jr.	Solon, OH
82 Nolan Borgersen	WR	6-3	185	Fr.	Westwood, NJ
83 Charlie Callinan	WR	6-4	220	So.	Westfield, NJ
84 Nat Dixon	WR	6-3	172	So.	Lynn Haven, FL
26 David Dudeck	WR	5-11	196	Sr.	Hamilton, NJ
3 Harrison Jackson	WR	6-2	205	Sr.	Round Hill, VA
85 Thadd Smith	WR	5-9	167	So.	Yeadon, PA
10 Bobby Swigert	WR	6-0	197	Sr.	Louisville, OH
Tight Ends	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
81 Louie Addazio	TE	6-3	256	Sr.	Gainesville, FL
63 Austin Chapman	TE	6-3	235	So.	Atlanta, GA
49 Cameron Croteau	TE	6-4	230	Jr.	Novato, CA
88 Michael Giacone	TE	6-5	262	Sr.	Westfield, NJ
89 Tommy Sweeney	TE	6-5	239	So.	Ramsey, NJ
Offensive Linemen	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
77 Jon Baker	OL	6-3	281	So.	Millis
74 Dave Bowen	OL	6-7	291	Sr.	Villanova, PA
72 Jim Cashman	OL	6-7	301	Sr.	Haddonfield, NJ
65 Ryan Conte	OL	6-4	285	So.	Somerville
58 James Hendren	OL	6-7	287	So.	Medfield
75 Chris Lindstrom	OL	6-4	236	Fr.	Dudley
73 Sam Schmal	OL	6-6	287	So.	Atlanta, GA
69 Austin Stevens	OL	6-3	256	So.	Montclair, NJ
50 Frank Taylor	OL	6-3	297	Jr.	Warrington, PA
54 Joel Rich	C	6-3	255	Jr.	Paris, OH

Defensive Linemen	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
45 Mehdi Abdesmad	DL	6-7	278	Sr.	Montreal, Quebec
92 Kevin Cohee	DL	6-2	245	So.	West Roxbury
57 Jack Cottrell	DL	6-4	235	Jr.	Eden Prairie, MN
97 Truman Gutapfel	DL	6-3	289	Jr.	Harrison, OH
98 Jack Kenny	DL	6-3	226	So.	Baltimore, MD
8 Harold Landry	DL	6-3	257	So.	Fayetteville, NC
94 Noa Merritt	DL	6-0	268	So.	Sparta, NJ
91 Joseph Vitiello	DL	6-4	250	So.	Bridgewater, NJ
90 Connor Wujciak	DL	6-3	304	Sr.	West Caldwell, NJ
93 Kevin Kavalec	DE	6-2	256	Jr.	Middleburg Heights, OH
87 Malachi Moore	DE	6-7	274	Sr.	Hackettstown, NJ
30 Mike Strizak	DE	6-2	229	Sr.	Fair Lawn, NJ
Linebackers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
49 Kevin Bletzer	LB	6-2	198	So.	West Roxbury
52 Steven Daniels	LB	6-0	257	Sr.	Cincinnati, OH
33 Tim Joy	LB	6-1	229	Sr.	Chelmsford
46 Jimmy Martin	LB	5-11	207	Fr.	Winter Park, FL
28 Matt Milano	LB	6-1	220	Jr.	Orlando, FL
44 Ty Schwab	LB	6-1	212	So.	Merritt Island, FL
13 Connor Strachan	LB	6-2	231	So.	Wellesley
Defensive Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
24 Allen Dawson	DB	6-0	193	So.	Ft. Lauderdale, FL
42 E.J. Fortenberry	DB	5-9	163	Jr.	Santa Monica, CA
17 Christian Lezzer	DB	6-0	210	So.	Clearfield, PA
14 Gabriel McClary	DB	6-3	185	So.	Orlando, FL
37 Kamrin Moore	DB	5-11	186	So.	District Heights, MD
47 Cameron Seward	DB	6-0	219	So.	Dunwoody, GA
27 Justin Simmons	DB	6-3	198	Sr.	Stuart, FL
20 Isaac Yiadom	DB	6-1	170	So.	Worcester
43 John Johnson	CB	6-0	194	Jr.	West Hyattsville, MD
39 Atem Ntantang	CB	5-11	188	So.	Purcellville, VA
Specialists	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
98 Mike Knoll	K/P		214	So.	Copley, OH
48 Jake Wilhelm	K	5-8	146	Sr.	Amherst, OH
42 Alex Howell	P/K	6-5	206	Sr.	Florence, SC
56 Michael Fischer	LS	6-0	217	Sr.	Wellesley
53 Leonard Skubal	LS	5-10	201	Sr.	Deerfield Beach, FL

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	26.2	83
Rushing	254.7	14
Passing	129.3	122
Total	384.0	80

DEFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	21.3	21
Rushing	94.5	2
Passing	229.8	66
Total	324.3	11

TO MARGIN	PER GAME	RANK
+1	+0.08	57

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	GP	Effic	Cmp	Att	Int	Pct	Yards	TD	Long	Avg/G
T. Murphy	13	126.19	131	230	10	57.0	1623	13	55	124.8
D. Wade	3	61.65	3	8	0	37.5	23	0	12	7.7

RECEIVING

NAME	GP	No.	Yards	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
J. Bordner	13	27	346	12.8	3	48	26.6
D. Crimmins	13	25	305	12.2	0	55	23.5
S. Alston	13	16	175	10.9	2	37	13.5

RUSHING

NAME	GP	Att.	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
T. Murphy	13	181	1403	219	1184	6.5	11	71	91.1
J. Hilliman	13	210	909	49	860	4.1	13	52	66.2
M. Willis	13	88	500	41	459	5.2	2	68	35.3

DEF. LEADERS

Tackles: J. Simmons 76, S. Daniels 72, M. Asprilla 70
Tackles for loss: J. Keyes 11.5, K. Kavalec 10.5, C. Wujciak 7.5
Sacks: B. Mihalik 4.5, J. Keyes 4, M. Moore 4
Interceptions: J. Simmons 2, seven tied with 1

247SPORTS EAGLES RECRUITING 2015

3 NEWCOMERS OF IMPACT

Anthony Palazzolo
Long, physical and full of upside. A legit 6-6, 302-pound rugged offensive tackle that Boston College has a rich tradition of developing and then sending to the NFL ranks.

Aaron Monteiro
Same deal as Palazzolo. Long, physical and full of upside. A legit 6-6, 308-pound rugged offensive tackle that Boston College has a rich tradition of developing into NFL draft picks.

Wyatt Ray
A 6-3, 240-pound defensive end out of national powerhouse Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) St. Thomas Aquinas with growth potential and change-of-direction. A steal for the Golden Eagles out of south Florida.

SLEEPER

Mehdi El Attrach
Put up huge numbers in a wide-open offense in high school that had several other D-I guys in it. Steve Addazio dipped back down into his old central Florida stomping grounds to get some quickness and skill.

2016 NEEDS

The Golden Eagles will continue to keep the best in New England at home. They need to add some perimeter speed, primarily from the South, to go with its size at home. Look for BC to try and land a franchise quarterback this cycle, too.

— Ryan Bartow

247SPORTS COMPOSITE

0	0	24	1
✪✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪	✪✪

Commitments	25
Average Stars	2.96
Total Stars	74
National Rank: 63	ACC: 14

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Zach Allen	SDE	6-5	250	✪✪✪	New Canaan, CT	New Canaan

Ranked the No. 54 outside linebacker and No. 4 prospect in Connecticut according to the 247Sports Composite…Named the Gatorade Player of the Year for the state of Connecticut... Three-year starter for the Rams, winning two state titles in 2013 and 2014... Set the school record for career sacks with 33.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Nolan Borgersen	WR	6-3	185	✪✪✪	Township Of Washington, NJ	Westwood

Enrolled in January… Ranked the No. 145 wide receiver and No. 25 prospect in New Jersey according to the 247Sports Composite…Set the New Jersey state receiving record for career catches (247), yards (4,212) and touchdowns (52) and the single-season records for receiving yards (1,894) and touchdowns (27) in junior year.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Jake Burt	TE	6-5	230	✪✪✪	Danvers	St. John's Prep

Ranked the No. 68 tight end and No. 9 prospect in Massachusetts according to the 247Sports Composite…Named to the *Boston Herald's* "Dandy Dozen," *Salem News'* All-Star Team and the Massachusetts Football Coaches Association's "Super 26" Team.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Lukas Denis	CB	5-11	170	✪✪✪	Everett	Everett

Ranked the No. 68 cornerback and No. 9 prospect in Massachusetts according to the 247Sports Composite…Named to the Massachusetts Football Coaches Association's "Super 26" Team and the *Boston Herald's* "Dandy Dozen.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Mehdi El Attrach	WR	6-0	190	✪✪✪	Orlando, FL	Lake Nona

Ranked the No. 197 wide receiver and No. 241 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Second-team Class 7A All-State honors as a senior ... Named to the All-Central Florida Team.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Chris Garrison	TE	6-3	215	✪✪✪	Groton	Lawrence Academy

Ranked the No. 47 tight end and No. 5 prospect in Massachusetts according to the 247Sports Composite…Three-time First-team Independent School League (ISL) honoree ... Earned ISL MVP accolades as a senior.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Ben Gilnes	ATH	6-2	195	✪✪✪	Cincinnati, OH	St. Xavier

Ranked the No. 88 athlete and No. 45 prospect in Ohio according to the 247Sports Composite…All-Ohio Division I honorable mention, Greater Catholic League first-team and first-team Division 1 All-District accolades in 2014.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Jordan Gowins	RB	5-11	210	✪✪✪	Long Island City, NY	St. Anthony's

Ranked the No. 150 running back and No. 13 prospect in New York according to the 247Sports Composite…earned first-team all-state honors, *Daily News'* CHSFL/Private League Player of the Year and the Hansen Award for the top player in Suffolk County in 2013.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Sharrieff Grice	RB	6-1	195	✪✪✪	West Hartford, CT	Kingswood-Oxford School

Ranked the No. 114 running back and No. 8 prospect in Connecticut according to the 247Sports Composite…A three-time New England Preparatory School Athletic Council (NEPSAC) All-New England Team honoree ... Earned All-Fairchester Athletic Association (FAA) First-Team accolades twice.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
William Harris	ATH	6-2	190	✪✪✪	Wallingford, CT	Choate Rosemary Hall

Ranked the No. 114 athlete and No. 7 prospect in Connecticut according to the 247Sports Composite…Named the 2014 NEPSAC Class A Player of the Year ... Earned NEPSAC Class A Division All-Star honors.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Davon Jones	CB	6-0	180	✪✪✪	Danvers	St. John's Prep

Ranked the No. 154 cornerback and No. 8 prospect in Massachusetts according to the 247Sports Composite…*Worcester Telegram & Gazette* All-Star honorable mention as a junior.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Tanner Karafa	ILB	6-3	240	✪✪✪	Ashburn, VA	Stone Bridge

Ranked the No. 40 inside linebacker and No. 32 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite…Named the 2014 Virginia High School League (VHSL) Regional and Conference Defensive Player of the Year.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Wyatt Knopfke	OG	6-4	290	✪✪✪	Bradenton, FL	St Stephen's Episcopal School

Ranked the No. 63 offensive guard and No. 135 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Earned Class 2A All-State first-team accolades as a senior to go along with Class 3A All-State first-team honors as a junior ... Named the MVP at the NUC All-South Classic.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Chris Lindstrom	OG	6-5	240	✪✪✪	Dudley	Shepherd Hill

Enrolled in January… Ranked the No. 87 offensive guard and No. 6 prospect in Massachusetts according to the 247Sports Composite…Named to the 2014 Massachusetts Football Coaches All-State team ... Member of the offensive line that allowed the Rams to run for over 3,000 yards in junior and senior campaigns.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Jimmy Martin	ILB	5-11	215	✪✪✪	Maitland, FL	Orangewood Christian School

Enrolled in January… Ranked the No. 52 inside linebacker and No. 190 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Earned All-State Class 3A second-team honors as a senior...Earned All-State Class 3A second-team honors in 2014.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Aaron Monteiro	OT	6-6	308	✪✪✪	Brockton	Brockton

Ranked the No. 103 offensive tackle and No. 2 prospect in Massachusetts according to the 247Sports Composite…Named to the Massachusetts Football Coaches Association "Super 26" Team as a senior.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Anthony Palazzolo	OT	6-6	302	✪✪✪	Fairfield, CT	Fairfield College Preparatory

Ranked the No. 73 offensive tackle and No. 3 prospect in Connecticut according to the 247Sports Composite…Named to the Connecticut High School Coaches Association All-State first-team as a senior.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Chase Pankey	WR	6-1	180	✪✪✪	Cincinnati, OH	Archbishop Moeller

Ranked the No. 148 wide receiver and No. 55 prospect in Ohio according to the 247Sports Composite…While injured most of the 2014 season, recorded 551 yards on 30 receptions, scoring nine touchdowns as a junior.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
John Phillips	OG	6-6	245	✪✪✪	Syracuse, NY	Christian Brothers Academy

Ranked the No. 70 offensive guard and No. 7 prospect in New York according to the 247Sports Composite…Named to the Class AA All-State first-team as a senior.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Wyatt Ray	WDE	6-3	240	✪✪✪	Fort Lauderdale, FL	St. Thomas Aquinas

Ranked the No. 46 weakside defensive end and No. 137 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Member of the St. Thomas Aquinas 2014 state championship team ... Earned All-State Class 7A first-team honors as a senior.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Elijah Robinson	QB	6-2	185	✪✪✪	Montclair, NJ	Montclair

Enrolled in January… Ranked the No. 24 weakside defensive end and No. 20 prospect in New Jersey according to the 247Sports Composite…Was the state's fifth-leading rusher with 1,842 yards, while completing 67 of 141 pass for 1,699 yards in senior season.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Ray Smith	DT	6-2	270	✪✪✪	San Diego, CA	Cathedral Catholic

Ranked the No. 78 defensive tackle and No. 143 prospect in California according to the 247Sports Composite…Played on three straight California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) state championship teams in 2012, 2013 and 2014.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Jeff Smith	ATH	6-1	170	✪✪✪	Clearwater, FL	Clearwater Central Catholic

Ranked the No. 95 athlete and No. 165 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Set the Central Catholic school record for touchdowns by a quarterback with 34.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Taj-Amir Torres	CB	5-10	170	✪✪	Amherst	Amherst Regional

Ranked the No. 193 athlete and No. 12 prospect in Massachusetts according to the 247Sports Composite…Earned MassLive first-team All-Western Mass honors in 2014 and 2013 ... Garnered All-Suburban League honors and a spot on the MassLive "Super 24" Team in senior season.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Michael Walker	ATH	5-11	178	✪✪✪	Naples, FL	Naples

Ranked the No. 150 athlete and No. 259 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Named the 2014 *Naples Daily News* Offensive Player of the Year ...Named to the 2014 *Fort Myers New Press* All-Area Team and AP Class 6A All-State second-team All-State.

PLAYER PROFILE

Wade Taking the Reins of Eagles' Offense

Darius Wade was one of the first recruits to commit to Steve Addazio for the Class of 2014. He enrolled early at Boston College, which allowed him to practice with the team and play in last year's spring game.

Addazio initially compared him to the Eagles' 2014 starter, Tyler Murphy, who was a senior.

"Both are athletic guys who throw and run the ball well. They have good arms and great leadership qualities," Addazio said.

Wade was immediately put on the two-deep behind Murphy as a freshman, and he did get his feet wet, appearing in three games that were basically out of hand — Pittsburgh, UMass and Louisville. Wade didn't get much of a chance to show off what he was capable of, mostly asked to simply hand off the ball to kill the clock.

Despite Addazio's first impression, Wade is going to be a drastically different quarterback than Murphy, giving the Eagles a variety of different ways to beat their opponents, not just with his legs, but with his arm. He has shown a knack in practice for throwing the deep ball, and although he is not nearly as fast as Murphy, all signs point to the continued use of the option runs that were so prevalent at BC in 2014.

Wade competed with Troy Flutie and Elijah Robinson for the starting job in the spring.

"He's got a great skill-set," Addazio said of Wade after spring practice. "He really throws the ball exceptionally well. He's got a good pocket presence to him, and he's a good size. He's got good thickness, and he can run, and he's got, I think, really great quickness and change of direction."

During spring practice, Wade made some big plays that stood out for the coaching staff, most notably hitting Thadd Smith for a long touchdown pass, a play the offense might not have seen in 2014.

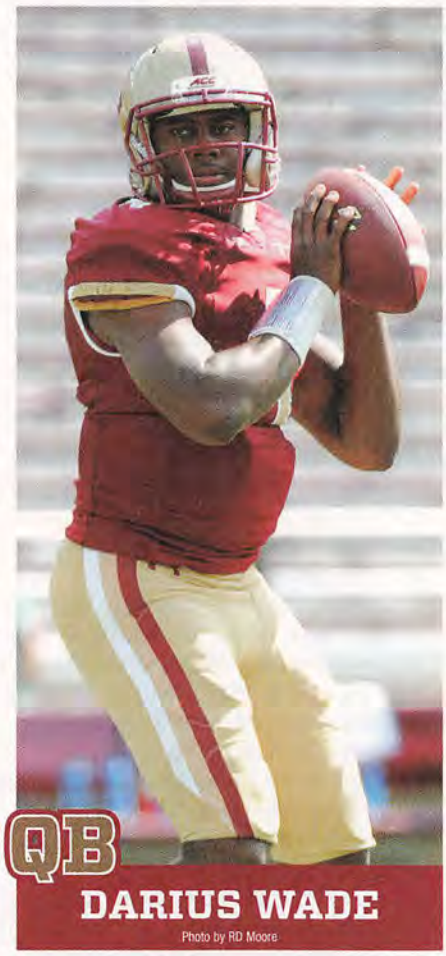


Photo by RD Moore

Wade is going to have a lot of variables surrounding him, including an inexperienced offensive line and a new stable of wide receivers. But Wade's positives are encouraging for the future of the offense.

"They are very, very young, but I love those guys," Addazio said. "I think they have a great attitude and a great work ethic."

BEST AND BRIGHTEST

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

RB JON HILLIMAN

The sophomore will be looking to build on a strong freshman campaign in which he ran for 860 yards and 13 touchdowns. ... He had a career game against Penn State's tough run defense in the Pinstripe Bowl, rushing for 148 yards and a TD. ... Earned third-team All-ACC honors. ... Coach Steve Addazio figures to lean more heavily on Hilliman this season as the feature back in his run-heavy offense.

EMERGING STAR

DE KEVIN KAVALEC

An afterthought at the beginning of 2014, Kavalec came on strong near the end of the season, becoming one of the most dangerous defensive ends in the ACC. ... He finished the season with 10.5 tackles for loss, including 3.5 sacks, and could easily build upon those numbers in 2015. ... Had a career-high 10 stops, with two sacks, against Wake Forest last season. ... Earned all-state honors as a high school player in Ohio.

TOP NEWCOMER

WR NOLAN BORGERSEN

Boston College's depth chart at wide receiver has holes in it, and no freshman is ready to make an impact like Borgersen. ... The 6-3 receiver from Westwood, N.J., set state career and single season records in practically every receiving category. ... Career prep receiving stats: 247 catches, 4,212 yards, 52 TDs. ... He enrolled early at BC and practiced with the team this spring.

Photos courtesy of Boston College Athletics.

42.5 yards per punt last season. He could challenge Knoll for the kicking job as well.

Junior Myles Willis and sophomore Thadd Smith most likely will be the kick returners. Willis can be explosive; he had a kick return for a touchdown last season.

SCHEDULE ANALYSIS

The schedule starts off gently as the Eagles open with two FCS schools, facing off against the Maine Black Bears and Howard Bison. Boston College was forced into playing a second FCS school when New Mexico State backed out of its scheduled game against the Eagles.

Boston College's ACC schedule starts with a Friday night game at home against Florida State, followed by seven more teams that went to bowls in 2014. Included in the first half of the season is a home game against MAC champion Northern Illinois and a road game against Duke.

November is set up to be very interesting. The Eagles play host to NC State, travel to Syracuse and head to Fenway Park to face off against Notre Dame.

In order for BC to become bowl eligible for the third straight season, they are going to need to win seven games (due to the double FCS game). It certainly is going to be a challenge, given its schedule.

— A.J. Black

CLEMSON TIGERS

For more coverage of the Tigers, visit clemson.247Sports.com

OFFENSIVE COORDINATORS: Jeff Scott, Tony Elliott **DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR:** Brent Venables **STADIUM:** Clemson Memorial: 81,473

TIGERS RELOAD FOR A RUN AT ACC TITLE – AND MORE

Clemson is coming off double-digit victories for the fourth consecutive season, a 40-6 dismantling of Big 12 power Oklahoma in the Russell Athletic Bowl and a top-15 ranking to end 2014.

Still, head coach Dabo Swinney wants more than just the one ACC title he claimed in 2011. Can 2015 be a special year?

Well, Swinney lost the largest senior class he's ever had. A rare, experienced group of defensive linemen, led by Vic Beasley (a first-round NFL draft pick and the school's all-time sack leader), is no longer around to defend the Tigers' title as the nation's No. 1 defense.

Chad Morris, the architect of Clemson's high-scoring offense, is now the head coach at SMU. And star quarterback Deshaun Watson is coming off three injuries in his freshman season, including a torn knee ligament that required surgery. That limited him to just eight games.

However, 2015 isn't exactly what you would call a rebuilding season.

"I like our team," Swinney said.

"I like the opportunity that we have. I think we've got the intangibles and the makings of a good team. Now we've got to go pull it all together, and if we can do that, then I think we've got a chance to have a good season."

With 15 mid-year enrollees from one of the nation's top recruiting classes and a returning stable of talented skill position players, Clemson heads into the season with the best chance of unseating ACC power Florida State. Doing that could put the Tigers in the four-team College Football Playoff.

"We could go all the way I think," Watson said. "Everyone has that work ethic to get to the next level."

There are depth and leadership issues that couldn't be solved in the spring — and they probably won't be answered until the season begins.

"This is not going to be as many seniors as we had last year, but from all indications, this is going to be a very serious group of leaders that I think are going to understand their role and the importance of their role," Swinney said.

OFFENSE

Swinney makes it quite clear that the Tigers run the "Clemson offense" — not the Chad Morris system. He promoted assistants Jeff Scott and Tony Elliott to co-coordinators before the bowl game.

"Coaches are going to come and go, but we don't change for a coach," Swinney said.

"We have something that we believe in and that we've recruited to. The philosophy is the same, and most people will watch us and they won't see anything different as far as how we play."

Elliott and Scott actually want to speed up the pace even more than Morris did. Clemson averaged 81.4 plays per game in 2013, but that number fell to 76.8 in 2014 because of several offensive inefficiencies.

"In the bowl game we were able to start playing faster there and see the other team wear down," Scott said. "Guys buy into it."

It all starts at quarterback. Watson, the top returning signal caller in the ACC, proved with his 1,466 yards, 14 touchdowns and two interceptions in just 137 passing attempts that the offense should revolve around him. The key is keeping him on the field and out of the training room.

Junior Mike Williams, who is coming off a 1,000-yard season, has the hands and strength to continue Clemson's NFL tradition at the position. Sophomore Artavis Scott, meanwhile, had a team-high 76 catches and eight touchdowns as a true freshman, and, much like former playmaker Sammy Watkins, is a field stretcher but without all the hype. That might be about to change.

"(Scott) needs to really grow and develop into a more complete receiver, in particular, making plays downfield," Swinney said. "We all know he can make plays with the ball in his hand."

Super prospects Deon Cain and Ray-Ray McCloud should also fit in immediately, and Clemson is in an enviable position at running back, where the top three rushers from last year — Wayne Gallman, C.J. Davidson and Adam Choice — all return.

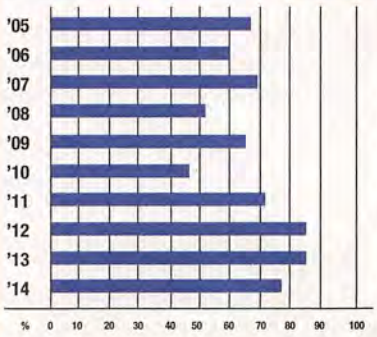
SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	'14 Record
Sept. 5	WOFFORD	6-5
Sept. 12	APPALACHIAN STATE	7-5
Sept. 17	at Louisville	9-4
Oct. 3	NOTRE DAME	8-5
Oct. 10	GEORGIA TECH	11-3
Oct. 17	BOSTON COLLEGE	7-6
Oct. 24	at Miami	6-7
Oct. 31	at NC State	8-5
Nov. 7	FLORIDA STATE	13-1
Nov. 14	at Syracuse	3-9
Nov. 21	WAKE FOREST	3-9
Nov. 28	at South Carolina	7-6

RESULTS

	10-3, 6-2	
L	at Georgia	21-45
W	SOUTH CAROLINA STATE	73-7
L	at Florida State (OT)	17-23
W	NORTH CAROLINA	50-35
W	NC STATE	41-0
W	LOUISVILLE	23-17
W	at Boston College	17-13
W	SYRACUSE	16-6
W	at Wake Forest	34-20
L	at Georgia Tech	6-28
W	GEORGIA STATE	28-6
W	SOUTH CAROLINA	35-17
	Russell Athletic Bowl	
W	vs. Oklahoma	40-6

10-YEAR WINNING TREND



AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:
Clemson, S.C.

2014:
10-3, 6-2 ACC (2nd, Atlantic)

COACH:
Dabo Swinney — At Clemson and overall: 61-26, 7 years

RETURNING STARTERS:
12; 7 offense, 4 defense, kicker

PLAYERS TO WATCH:
QB Deshaun Watson, RB Wayne Gallman, WR Mike Williams, WR Artavis Scott, DE Shaq Lawson, CB Mackensie Alexander, FS Jayron Kearse

PRIMARY STRENGTHS:
With a healthy Watson, Clemson could return to being an offensive power nationally after a slight slip a year ago. He's the best quarterback in the league and can be a program-changer with the level of skill players joining him. There are several freshmen who could make major impacts by the end of the season.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS:
There's a huge loss in leadership and production on defense. While the first team still looks pretty good on paper, there won't be the same kind of depth if starters go down. Watson still has to shake the injury-prone tag and make it through a full season. With expectations of winning the ACC, Clemson doesn't want to rely on a backup quarterback again.

KEY LOSSES:
DE Vic Beasley, DT Grady Jarrett, LB Tony Steward, LB Stephone Anthony, FS Robert Smith

OVERVIEW:
Swinney seemingly has this program rolling toward something bigger, but offense will have to carry a heavy load this season. It looks like the Nov. 7 home game against Florida State will be for the division title — with the winner being a heavy favorite in the ACC Championship Game. Clemson has the talent, and the quarterback, to win the league.

KEY NUMBER:
4 Number of first-round draft picks for Clemson in the past three years: DeAndre Hopkins, Sammy Watkins, Vic Beasley and Stephone Anthony.

QB
Deshaun WATSON

Photo by AP Photo/Rainier Ehrhardt

WR
MIKE WILLIAMS
Photo by Joshua S. Kelly-USA TODAY Sports

SCOUTING REPORT: Offense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
QB	**Deshaun Watson***	So.	Set eight school records as a freshman.	Nick Schuessler, Jr.
RB	**Wayne Gallman***	So.	Averaged 95 yards last six games of 2014.	Zac Brooks, Jr.
WR	**Mike Williams***	Jr.	Went over 1,000 yards as a sophomore.	Trevion Thompson, So.
WR	**Artavis Scott***	So.	Earned numerous Freshman All-American honors.	Deon Cain, Fr.
WR	Charone Peake	Sr.	Injuries have cost him 15 games last two seasons.	Germone Hopper, Jr.
TE	**Jordan Leggett***	Jr.	Should see the bulk of snaps.	Stanton Seckinger, Sr.
LT	**Isaiah Battle***	Sr.	Eighth in school history in snaps by a tackle.	Mitch Hyatt, Fr.
LG	Eric Mac Lain	Sr.	Former TE has one career start.	Maverick Morris, So.
C	**Ryan Norton***	Sr.	Has played over 1,850 career snaps.	Justin Falcinelli, So.
RG	Tyrone Crowder	So.	Reshaped body to earn starting role.	Taylor Hearn, So.
RT	Joe Gore	Sr.	Has started only three career games.	Jake Fruhmorgen, Fr.
K	**Ammon Lakip***	Sr.	Made 13 consecutive field goals last year.	Alex Spence, So.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

SCOUTING REPORT: Defense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
DE	Shaq Lawson	Jr.	Was unblockable in spring ball.	Albert Huggins, Fr.
DT	D.J. Reader	Sr.	Steps into a major leadership role.	Scott Pagano, So.
DT	Carlos Watkins	Jr.	Blocked several field goal attempts in spring.	Christian Wilkins, Fr.
DE	Kevin Dodd	Jr.	Looking for his first career start.	Ebenezer Ogundeko, So.
LB	**B.J. Goodson***	Sr.	Waited his turn to become the QB of defense.	Kendall Joseph, So.
LB	Ben Boulware	Jr.	One of the team's most violent hitters.	Korie Rogers, So.
LB/NB	**Korrin Wiggins***	Jr.	Steady, smart defender in hybrid role.	Dorian O'Daniel, So.
CB	**Mackensie Alexander***	So.	Lock-down cornerback could be a national star.	Ryan Carter, So.
CB	Cordrea Tankersley	Jr.	Lot of bodies fighting for this spot.	Adrian Baker, So.
SS	Jadar Johnson	Jr.	Led team with 84 INT return yards in 2014.	Korrin Wiggins, Jr.
FS	**Jayron Kearse***	Jr.	Is the defense's top returning playmaker.	T.J. Green, Jr.
P	Andy Teasdall	Jr.	Has just three career punts.	Ammon Lakip, Sr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

The line, which seems to have questions marks every season, returns only two starters, but left tackle Mitch Hyatt heads up a talented group of four freshmen fighting for playing time.

DEFENSE

It's unrealistic to think a squad can lose seven starters and remain the top unit in the country, but Clemson has enough returning talent to avoid a sharp drop-off.

"Hopefully you've built a culture where that's the expectation," defensive coordinator Brent Venables said. "You don't harp on what you don't have. You harp on what you do have, what you want and how you get there."

Clemson brings back nearly a dozen defenders who made big contributions to a squad that allowed 260.8 yards and 16.7 points per game last year.

Junior defensive end Shaq Lawson was a reserve player last year but is primed to step into the role that made Beasley a star.

"Not a huge difference between Shaq Lawson and Vic Beasley," Swinney said. "Shaq is going to bring some certain things to the table that Vic didn't."

D.J. Reader has been around long enough to be the top candidate to replace tackle Grady Jarrett's leadership and production, while ends Kevin Dodd and Scott Pagano made big strides in the offseason.

The secondary is a deep unit led by sophomore Mackensie Alexander, a lock-down corner with pro prospects. Cordrea Tankersley is the most experienced option at the other corner spot, which could be a revolving door.

Clemson could really excel in the back end, where Jayron Kearse, nephew of former NFL standout Jevon Kearse, had a huge spring and appears ready to become an All-ACC candidate. Korrin Wiggins and Jadar Johnson are undisputed starters.

It's the guys in the middle who will keep Venables up at night. Middle linebacker B.J. Goodson is a senior who's played in 32 games and is the best option to replace All-ACC first-teamer Stephone Anthony. Junior Ben Boulware has experience and will have to have a monster junior season because the depth chart after him is very unclear.

"I think we'll have a strong defense," Venables said. "I need to develop guys and get more depth at linebacker. We're an injury away from that position being a liability, but I think we've got a chance to have a good corps."

SPECIAL TEAMS

This is a unit that didn't impress Swinney during the spring, but there is enough talent to keep it from being a liability. Ammon Lakip made 21 of 28 field goal attempts and 43 of 44 extra points in his first season as a starter, when he was a Lou Groza Award semifinalist. He lost weight in the offseason and hopes to add more consistency to his long-range tries.

NOTEBOOK

After turning Clemson into the No. 1 defense in the country in 2014, coordinator **Brent Venables** earned interest from other schools, including LSU, which was in the market for a new coordinator.

Ultimately, Venables agreed to stay at Clemson, which rewarded him with a $475,000 raise. That puts Venables' annual salary at $1.35 million.

"I would've stayed for a lot less," Venables joked. "But they didn't ask."

• Clemson Memorial Stadium will open the season with refurbished luxury suites and a new club level. Athletic director **Dan Radakovich** is also pushing for approval on a $60 million, 157,000-square foot football operations building located adjacent to the already state-of-the-art practice facility.

• In the most-emphasized position battle of the spring, junior quarterback **Nick Schuessler** emerged as the clear No. 2 behind starter **Deshaun Watson**, who sat out to rehab his surgically repaired knee. Schuessler, a former walk-on who moved ahead of talented true freshmen **Kelly Bryant** and **Tucker Israel**, threw for 201 yards and two touchdowns as the MVP of the spring game.

• After combining for 45 catches for 457 yards in 2013, Clemson tight ends had just 2.4 receptions per game for 29.6 yards per contest in 2014. Co-offensive coordinators **Jeff Scott** and **Tony Elliott** want to change that.

Junior **Jordan Leggett**, who had 14 catches for 161 yards and a touchdown last year, gives them a talented option they hope can also line up in the backfield.

"We were at our very best with guys like **Dwayne Allen**, who did everything," Scott said. "I think we're getting back to that now. Jordan Leggett had a really good spring."

• One of the biggest offensive statistical improvements Clemson is looking to make this season is in the red zone. The Tigers ranked 113th nationally in red-zone efficiency last year, and the coaches are looking at both personnel and scheme to figure out how to get better.

• Former Freshman All-American defender **Travis Blanks** hasn't played football since late in the 2013 season because of two ACL tears. He could be back on the field this fall and will likely move from safety to linebacker.

TIGERS SPRING ROSTER

Quarterbacks		Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
2	Kelly Bryant	QB	6-4	205	Fr.	Calhoun Falls
10	Tucker Israel	QB	5-11	190	Fr.	Orlando, FL
12	Nick Schuessler	QB	6-3	195	Jr.	Grayson, GA
4	Deshaun Watson	QB	6-2	205	So.	Gainesville, GA
Running Backs		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
24	Zac Brooks	RB	6-0	200	Jr.	Jonesboro, AR
26	Adam Choice	RB	5-9	215	So.	Thomasville, GA
21	C.J. Davidson	RB	5-10	200	Sr.	Clemson
22	Tyshon Dye	RB	5-11	215	So.	Elberton, GA
27	C.J. Fuller	RB	5-9	215	Fr.	Easley
9	Wayne Gallman	RB	6-1	205	So.	Loganville, GA
	Jae'lon Oglesby	RB	5-11	175	Fr.	Central
Wide Receivers		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
11	Shadell Bell	WR	6-3	190	Fr.	Decatur, GA
39	Jordan Bianchi	WR	6-6	210	Sr.	Greer
	Deon Cain	WR	6-1	190	Fr.	Tampa, FL
82	Adrien Dunn	WR	5-7	170	So.	Clemson
5	Germone Hopper	WR	5-11	175	Jr.	Charlotte, NC
88	Sean Mac Lain	WR	6-4	210	So.	Hope Mills
	Ray-Ray McCloud	WR	5-9	175	Fr.	Land O' Lakes, FL
19	Charone Peake	WR	6-2	205	Sr.	Moore
35	Hunter Renfrow	WR	5-10	170	Fr.	Myrtle Beach
85	Seth Ryan	WR	5-11	170	So.	Summit, NJ
3	Artavis Scott	WR	5-10	190	So.	Oldsmar, FL
1	Trevion Thompson	WR	6-2	195	Fr.	Durham, NC
7	Mike Williams	WR	6-4	210	Jr.	Vance
Tight Ends		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
40	Roderick Byers	TE	6-3	290	Sr.	Rock Hill
87	D.J. Greenlee	TE	6-1	235	So.	Clemson
16	Jordan Leggett	TE	6-5	250	Jr.	Navarre, FL
89	Jay Jay McCullough	TE	6-3	248	Jr.	Fort Mill
59	Justin Miller	TE	6-0	260	So.	Six Mile
80	Milan Richard	TE	6-2	245	Fr.	Savannah, GA
81	Stanton Seckinger	TE	6-5	240	Sr.	Isle of Palms
84	Cannon Smith	TE	6-4	240	Fr.	Columbia
	Garrett Williams	TE	6-4	225	Fr.	Orlando, FL
Offensive Linemen		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
63	Jake Fruhmorgen	OL	6-5	285	Fr.	Tampa, FL
77	Zach Giella	OL	6-5	275	Fr.	Augusta, GA
71	Noah Green	OL	6-5	275	Fr.	Boiling Springs
51	Taylor Hearn	OL	6-4	325	Fr.	Williston
75	Mitch Hyatt	OL	6-6	270	Fr.	Sugar Hill, GA
69	Maverick Morris	OL	6-4	295	So.	Broxton, GA
58	Ryan Norton	OL	6-3	285	Sr.	Simpsonville
79	Isaiah Battle	OT	6-7	290	Sr.	Brooklyn, NY
61	William Cockerill	OT	6-6	250	Jr.	Sumter
50	Justin Falcinelli	OT	6-3	305	Fr.	Middleton, MD
73	Joe Gore	OT	6-5	290	Sr.	Lake Waccamaw, NC
65	Oliver Jones	OT	6-5	320	Jr.	Ninety Six
78	Eric Mac Lain	OT	6-4	305	Sr.	Hope Mills, NC
75	Daniel Stone	OT	6-4	265	Jr.	Simpsonville
55	Tyrone Crowder	OG	6-2	330	So.	Marston, NC
57	Jay Guillermo	C	6-3	310	Jr.	Maryville, TN
54	Zach Riggs	C	6-5	270	So.	Greer

Defensive Linemen		Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
90	Shaq Lawson	DL	6-3	275	Jr.	Central
67	Albert Huggins	DL	6-3	280	Fr.	Orangeburg
93	Sterling Johnson	DL	6-5	275	Fr.	Clayton, NC
	Gage Cervenka	DT	6-3	275	Fr.	Greenwood
56	Scott Pagano	DT	6-3	295	So.	Honolulu, HI
48	D.J. Reader	DT	6-2	325	Sr.	Greensboro, NC
50	Jabril Robinson	DT	6-3	255	Fr.	Leland, NC
94	Carlos Watkins	DT	6-3	295	Jr.	Mooresboro, NC
	Christian Wilkins	DT	6-5	305	Fr.	Longmeadow, CT
53	Martin Aiken	DE	6-2	255	Jr.	Smoaks
	Austin Bryant	DE	6-4	250	Fr.	Pavo, GA
	LaSamuel Davis	DE	6-4	215	Fr.	Bamberg
98	Kevin Dodd	DE	6-5	275	Jr.	Taylors
	Clelin Ferrell	DE	6-5	220	Fr.	Richmond, VA
56	Collins Mauldin	DE	6-1	230	Sr.	Rock Hill
1	Ebenezer Ogundeko	DE	6-3	250	So.	Brooklyn, NY
85	Dane Rogers	DE	6-3	260	So.	Shelby, NC
49	Richard Yeargin	DE	6-4	225	Fr.	Lauderdale Lakes, FL
Linebackers		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
40	Jaquarius Brice	LB	6-2	215	Fr.	Lancaster
41	T.J. Burrell	LB	5-11	215	Jr.	Goose Creek
36	Judah Davis	LB	6-2	220	Fr.	Clemson
33	J.D. Davis	LB	6-2	220	Fr.	Clemson
44	B.J. Goodson	LB	6-0	240	Sr.	Lamar
35	Quintin Hall	LB	5-11	225	Jr.	Piedmont
34	Kendall Joseph	LB	5-11	225	Fr.	Belton
	Tanner Muse	LB	6-4	205	Fr.	Belmont, NC
6	Dorian O'Daniel	LB	6-2	215	So.	Olney, MD
46	Chad Richardson	LB	5-11	225	Jr.	Sumter
	Chad Smith	LB	6-3	215	Fr.	Sterling, VA
30	Jalen Williams	LB	6-0	215	Fr.	Columbia
10	Ben Boulware	OLB	6-0	235	Jr.	Anderson
45	Chris Register	OLB	6-2	245	Fr.	Browns Summit, NC
43	Korie Rogers	OLB	6-2	235	Fr.	Buford, GA
Defensive Backs		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
18	Jadar Johnson	DB	6-0	200	Jr.	Orangeburg
23	Van Smith	DB	6-2	170	Fr.	Cornelius, NC
25	Cordrea Tankersley	DB	6-1	195	Jr.	Beech Island
12	Korrin Wiggins	DB	5-11	195	Jr.	Durham, NC
2	Mackensie Alexander	CB	5-10	190	So.	Immokalee, FL
21	Adrian Baker	CB	5-11	180	So.	Hallandale, FL
31	Ryan Carter	CB	5-9	180	So.	Grayson, GA
14	Kaleb Chalmers	CB	6-0	180	Fr.	Greenwood
29	Marcus Edmond	CB	5-11	170	So.	Hopkins
	Mark Fields	CB	5-10	185	Fr.	Cornelius, NC
37	Cameron Scott	CB	5-11	200	Fr.	Florence
49	Beau Brown	S	6-0	195	Sr.	Beaufort
17	Jefferie Gibson	S	6-4	200	Fr.	Hope Mills, NC
15	T.J. Green	S	6-3	205	Jr.	Sylacauga, AL
20	Jayron Kearse	S	6-4	210	Jr.	Fort Myers, FL
Specialists		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
47	Alex Spence	K	6-2	190	Fr.	Florence
39	Christian Groomes	P/PK	5-9	190	Fr.	Central
36	Ammon Lakip	P/PK	5-11	200	Sr.	Alpharetta, GA
95	Andy Teasdall	P	5-11	185	Jr.	Winston-Salem, NC
51	Jim Brown	LS	6-4	230	Sr.	Walterboro
61	David Estes	LS	6-1	205	Jr.	Mauldin
59	Bradley Tatko	LS	6-0	225	So.	Greenwood

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	30.8	51
Rushing	146.5	88
Passing	261.8	38
Total	408.3	58

DEFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	16.7	3
Rushing	103.4	5
Passing	157.4	2
Total	260.8	1

TO MARGIN	PER GAME	RANK
+ 6	+0.46	T-33

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	GP	Effic	Cmp	Att	Int	Pct	Yards	TD	Long	Avg/G
Cole Stoudt	13	119.1	191	302	10	63.2	1892	9	69	145.5
Deshaun Watson	8	188.6	93	137	2	67.9	1466	14	74	183.2

RECEIVING

NAME	GP	No.	Yards	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
Artavis Scott	13	76	965	12.7	8	70	74.2
Mike Williams	13	57	1030	18.1	6	56	79.2
Adam Humphries	13	30	204	6.8	0	25	15.7

RUSHING

NAME	GP	Att.	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
Wayne Gallman	13	161	804	35	769	4.8	4	34	59.2
C.J. Davidson	13	64	261	13	248	3.9	3	32	19.1
Adam Choice	6	50	233	15	218	4.4	1	34	36.3

DEF. LEADERS

Tackles: S. Anthony 75, R. Smith 69, J. Kearse 60
Tackles for loss: V. Beasley 21.5, S. Lawson 11, S. Anthony 10.5
Sacks: V. Beasley 12, T. Steward 3.5, S. Lawson 3.5
Interceptions: R. Smith 2, J. Kearse 2, K. Wiggins 2, J. Johnson 2

247SPORTS TIGERS RECRUITING 2015

3 NEWCOMERS OF IMPACT

Albert Huggins

Coming from DL Heaven in the Carolinas, the U.S. Army All-American has power and explosive twitch off the ball. Enrolled early and is in the mix at defensive tackle. Big upside to be the next great defensive tackle for the Tigers.

Mitch Hyatt

Clemson's highest-ranked offensive tackle get in the modern era. His uncle Dan Benish played for Clemson's 1981 national title team. Hyatt has the athleticism, frame, reach and work ethic to be the Tigers' franchise left tackle for years to come.

Deon Cain

The nation's No. 1 wide receiver will carry on the tradition of what's turning into Wide Receiver U. He's the next great one, given his upside at the position, explosive speed, size and ball skills. Has the goods to be a three-and-done player for the Tigers like Martavis Bryant, Deandre Hopkins and Sammy Watkins were.

SLEEPER

Van Smith

A pure football player that did very well at safety, fullback, cornerback, linebacker and wide receiver on the prep level. Has the toughness, closing speed, instincts and playmaking skills to be a ball-hawk at free safety in the future for the Tigers. A transplant from Pittsburgh that plays with that needed edge.

2016 NEEDS

Clemson is always looking to load up on its annual need: toughness on the offensive line. That continues to be the program's biggest element it searches for and has been for a decade. The Tigers would also like to add a dual-threat quarterback, a few four-star receivers, an elite back, three linebackers and a pair of standout defensive linemen.

— Ryan Bartow

247SPORTS COMPOSITE

5★	4★	3★	2★
3	9	12	2

Commitments	26
Average Stars	3.5
Total Stars	91
National Rank: 8	ACC: 2

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Shadell Bell	WR	6-3	190	3★	Decatur, GA	Columbia
Enrolled in January... Ranked as the nation's No. 55 wide receiver and No. 44 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite...Had 45 catches for 600 yards and seven touchdowns in 2013.						
Kelly Bryant	QB	6-4	205	3★	Piedmont	Wren
Enrolled in January... Ranked as the nation's No. 14 dual-threat quarterback and No. 7 prospect in South Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite.						
Austin Bryant	WDE	6-5	250	4★	Thomasville, GA	Thomas County Central
Ranked as the nation's No. 200 prospect overall, No. 12 weakside defensive end and No. 20 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite.						
Deon Cain	WR	6-1	194	5★	Tampa, FL	Tampa Bay Tech
U.S. Army All-American...Ranked as the nation's No. 18 prospect overall, No. 2 wide receiver and No. 8 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite... Named 2014 All-USA second-team by *USA TODAY*.						
Gage Cervenka	DT	6-1	275	3★	Greenwood	Emerald
Enrolled in January... Ranked as the nation's No. 51 defensive tackle and No. 12 prospect in South Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite...Had 101 tackles, 28 tackles for loss, seven sacks and two forced fumbles in 2013.						
Kaleb Chalmers	CB	5-11	171	3★	Greenwood	Greenwood
Enrolled in January... Ranked as the nation's No. 46 cornerback and No. 9 prospect in South Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite.						
LaSamuel Davis	WDE	6-3	194	3★	Bamberg	Bamberg Ehrhardt
Ranked as the nation's No. 53 weak-side defensive end and No. 14 prospect in South Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite.						
Judah Davis	ILB	6-2	215	2★	Central	D W Daniel
Ranked as the nation's No. 113 inside linebacker and No. 51 prospect in South Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite...Will grayshirt.						
J.D. Davis	ILB	6-2	215	2★	Central	D W Daniel
Ranked as the nation's No. 112 inside linebacker and No. 50 prospect in South Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite...Will grayshirt.						
Clelin Ferrell	WDE	6-5	225	4★	Richmond, VA	Benedictine
Ranked as the nation's No. 115 prospect overall, No. 7 weakside defensive end and No. 5 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite.						
Mark Fields	CB	5-11	190	4★	Cornelius, NC	William Amos Hough
U.S. Army All-American...Ranked as the nation's No. 95 prospect overall, No. 9 cornerback and No. 4 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite...Originally committed to South Carolina.						
Jake Fruhmorgen	OT	6-5	280	4★	Tampa, FL	Plant
U.S. Army All-American...Ranked as the nation's No. 119 prospect overall, No. 8 offensive tackle and No. 20 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite... Father, John, played for the Miami Dolphins and at Alabama.						
Zach Giella	OT	6-6	300	3★	Augusta, GA	Augusta Christian Schools
Enrolled in January... Ranked as the nation's No. 67 offensive tackle and No. 61 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite.						
Noah Green	OT	6-5	275	3★	Boiling Springs	Boiling Springs
Enrolled in January... Ranked as the nation's No. 391 prospect overall, No. 41 offensive tackle and No. 6 prospect in South Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite... Participated in Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas.						

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Albert Huggins	DT	6-3	283	4★	Orangeburg	Orangeburg-Wilkinson
Enrolled in January... U.S. Army All-American...Ranked as the nation's No. 92 prospect overall, No. 12 defensive tackle and No. 1 prospect in South Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite...Had 65 tackles, 13 tackles for loss and 11 sacks in 2013.						
Mitch Hyatt	OT	6-5	272	5★	Suwanee, GA	North Gwinnett
Enrolled in January... U.S. Army All-American...Ranked as the nation's No. 22 prospect overall, No. 2 offensive tackle and No. 2 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite... Named 2014 All-USA first-team by *USA TODAY*.						
Tucker Israel	QB	6-0	200	3★	Orlando, FL	Lake Nona
Enrolled in January... Ranked as the nation's No. 22 dual-threat quarterback and No. 102 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite...Class 5A Player of the Year.						
Denzel Johnson	S	6-2	187	3★	Columbia	A.C. Flora
Two-way starter ... As a senior, had 60 tackles and two interceptions ... Caught 69 passes for 910 yards and 12 touchdowns.						
Sterling Johnson	DT	6-5	281	3★	Clayton, NC	Cleveland
Enrolled in January... Ranked as the nation's No. 373 prospect overall, No. 24 defensive tackle and No. 10 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite... Had 80 tackles, eight sacks and three forced fumbles in 2013.						
Ray-Ray McCloud III	ATH	5-9	175	4★	Tampa, FL	Sickles
Under Armour All-American...Ranked as the nation's No. 81 prospect overall, No. 7 athlete and No. 13 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite...Rushed for 2,316 yards and 26 touchdowns as a junior.						
Tanner Muse	S	6-3	207	3★	Belmont, NC	South Point
Ranked as the nation's No. 48 safety and No. 24 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite...Participated in the Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas.						
Chad Smith	OLB	6-3	213	4★	Sterling, VA	Dominion
Enrolled in January... U.S. Army All-American...Ranked as the nation's No. 240 prospect overall, No. 15 outside linebacker and No. 10 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite...Had 94 tackles, 13 tackles for loss and six interceptions in 2013.						
Van Smith	ATH	5-11	180	4★	Cornelius, NC	William Amos Hough
Enrolled in January... Ranked as the nation's No. 319 prospect overall, No. 21 athlete and No. 9 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite.						
Amir Trapp	CB	5-8	160	3★	Central	D W Daniel
Ranked as the nation's No. 146 cornerback and No. 25 prospect in South Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite...Will Grayshirt.						
Christian Wilkins	DT	6-4	290	5★	Suffield, CT	Suffield Academy
Under Armour All-American...Ranked as the nation's No. 24 prospect overall, No. 6 defensive tackle and No. 1 prospect in Connecticut according to the 247Sports Composite.						
Garrett Williams	TE	6-4	220	4★	Orlando, FL	The First Academy
Under Armour All-American...Ranked as the nation's No. 187 prospect overall, No. 4 tight end and No. 25 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite.						

PLAYER PROFILE

Gallman's Consistency Earns Him RB Nod

In Clemson's most crowded backfield of the Dabo Swinney era, Wayne Gallman has found a way to stand out.

The 6-1, 205-pound sophomore running back is in front of Zac Brooks, Tyshon Dye, C.J. Davidson, C.J. Fuller and Adam Choice on the depth chart because of what he did at the end of last season and how he carried that over into the spring.

"He's earned that (starting job) and it's obvious," Swinney said. "He's consistent day in and day out."

Gallman ran for 571 of his team-high 769 yards in the final six games of 2014, when he had five total touchdowns and nearly 100 more carries than the next guy. That gave him an advantage heading into spring ball. He averaged 10.1 yards per carry in the spring game and never gave up that top spot.

"I don't want to just come out and say I'm (the starter)," Gallman said, "but I think I'm just trying to take that role as a leader and push everybody to do their best because that's what I'm trying to come out here and do for me."

Gallman, who redshirted in 2013, didn't make his first career start until Oct. 4 of last year, when he also reached double digits in carries for the first time against NC State. He didn't really feel comfortable in the offense until the regular-season finale against rival South Carolina, which he torched for 191 yards and a touchdown on 27 carries in a 35-17 win.

"Everything's pretty much slowed down for me," Gallman said. "I'm really starting to see where the play is going to develop before it starts."

Gallman started his career behind a much more heralded and experienced group of rushers. He was a three-star running back coming out of Grayson High School in Loganville, Ga., where he rushed for 516 yards and eight touchdowns as a senior in an untraditional Wing T offense that didn't showcase his skill set.

Photo by Brett Davis-USA TODAY Sports

Gallman also played a prominent linebacker role in high school, but running back has been his favorite position since he was 5 years old.

"His upside is probably bigger than the other guys," co-offensive coordinator and running back coach Tony Elliott said. "For a big guy, he's got tremendous quickness. His vision is starting to improve and his body is starting to truly develop. He's going to have that complete combination of speed, size and power."

BEST AND BRIGHTEST

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

QB DESHAUN WATSON

Passing efficiency rating of 188.6 as a freshman led the all of the nation's QBs with at least 125 attempts. ... Threw for 1,466 yards and 14 touchdowns with just two interceptions while completing 67.9 percent of his passes. ... Added 200 yards rushing and five touchdowns on 63 carries. .... Tore his ACL late in the season against Georgia Tech. .... Threw for 435 yards and a school-record six touchdowns in a 50-35 victory over North Carolina.

EMERGING STAR

DE SHAQ LAWSON

Lawson is the best option to replace All-American Vic Beasley as the team's top pass rusher. ... Has 79 career tackles, 7.5 sacks, one caused fumble and one blocked kick in a reserve role. ... Leads ACC returning defenders with 21 career tackles for a loss. ... Only second Clemson defender ever to post two seasons with double-digit tackles for a loss. ... Earned second-team Freshman All-American honors in 2013.

TOP NEWCOMER

WR/RB RAY-RAY MCCLOUD

Rushed for 5,568 yards and 55 touchdowns in three years at Hillsborough County (Fla.) High School. ... Rushed for more than 2,300 yards and had 26 touchdowns as a junior. ... Played in the 2015 Under Armour All-American Game. ... Speed and vision give him a chance to make immediate impact on a deep skill-position offense. ... Could be used as a receiver or running back as well as in special packages. ... Will compete right away for kick-return duties.

Photos courtesy of Clemson Athletics.

Andy Teasdall has just three career punts, but he has the backing of the coaching staff to replace Bradley Pinion, who left for the NFL Draft as a junior punter.

The return game is a mixed bag for now; Swinney ran live kicks and punts in the spring to help sort out the depth chart. Expect freshmen Deon Cain and Ray-Ray McCloud to get a look this fall.

SCHEDULE ANALYSIS

This isn't the easiest slate Clemson has faced in recent years, but it sets up nicely.

It starts with non-conference foes Wofford and Appalachian State, but then it's off to Louisville for a challenging Thursday night road game. Following the longest break in between games in school history since 1918, Clemson hosts Notre Dame for the first time since 1977.

After Georgia Tech and Boston College at home, road contests against Miami and NC State set up the biggest showdown in ACC play when Florida State comes to Clemson on Nov. 7.

The Tigers then face winnable games at Syracuse and against Wake Forest before the Nov. 28 showdown with rival South Carolina, which the Tigers beat in 2014 for the first time since 2008.

— Brad Senkiw

DUKE BLUE DEVILS

For more coverage of the Blue Devils, visit duke.247Sports.com

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Scottie Montgomery **DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR:** Jim Knowles **STADIUM:** Wallace Wade Stadium: 33,941

REBUILT DUKE OUT TO PROVE RECENT SUCCESS NO FLUKE

David Cutcliffe took over a dumpster fire masquerading as a Division I football program in 2008. It took him four seasons of struggles — including a pair of three-win seasons — to put a system in place before things turned around.

Now, the Blue Devils are thriving like never before in modern times.

Duke had never played bowl games in back-to-back seasons. Now, the Blue Devils have done so in three consecutive years. They've been to the ACC Championship Game for the first time and, in April, guard Laken Tomlinson became the school's first NFL first-round draft pick since 1987.

Duke football isn't among the nation's elite like Mike Krzyzewski's men's basketball program, but Cutcliffe has certainly established a winning culture. Duke has won 19 games over the last two seasons.

This season, though, represents an interesting challenge to that progress.

The Blue Devils are replacing important starters: two offensive linemen, a quarterback, two wide receivers and three defensive linemen.

A true look at the state of Cutcliffe's work could be visible this season. If the Blue Devils can prove they have the depth to fill those important positions and still post a winning record, it will be clear that Duke's recent ACC success was no fluke.

Staying power could further be influenced by what goes on at the stadium other than on game day. While Duke has built a winning program on the field, work is still ongoing to bring its facilities up to ACC standards, as Wallace Wade Stadium is in the midst of renovation.

The same can be said for the overall depth of the team's talent, which will be tested this season.

OFFENSE

Duke has big pieces to replace as quarterback Anthony Boone, the starter for the last two seasons, and wide receiver Jamison Crowder — who caught 283 passes for 3,641 yards and 23 touchdowns over the last four seasons — completed their eligibility.

The Blue Devils also lost All-American guard Laken Tomlinson, a first-round pick by the Detroit Lions, and left tackle Takoby Cofield, a three-year starter. Even departed wide receiver Issac Blakeney caught 47 passes for 559 yards and a team-best seven touchdowns last year.

All that said, Cutcliffe and offensive coordinator Scottie Montgomery plan to have an offense capable of approaching the 32.4 points per game Duke scored last season.

Thomas Sirk takes over at quarterback after being used in short-yardage situations last season. He succeeded in that role, rushing for eight touchdowns and throwing for three more. A redshirt junior, Sirk is sturdy at 6-4, 215 pounds with good running ability. His abilities in the passing game have yet to be proven, but Cutcliffe declared his faith in Sirk following spring practice.

Replacing Crowder and, to a lesser extent Blakeney, means chances for other unproven players. Junior Johnell Barnes showed flashes of deep-threat ability, catching 23 passes for 237 yards last season. Redshirt freshman Chris Taylor had a strong spring and has the speed to be the Blue Devils' top deep threat.

The passing game will be aided by the return of tight end Braxton Deaver, who missed last season with a torn ACL. If healthy, which he appears to be, the sixth-year senior is one of the ACC's best tight ends. In 2013, he caught 46 passes for 600 yards and four touchdowns. He's also an excellent blocker and has the attention of NFL scouts.

All that said about the passing game, Duke also has the capability of showing a strong rushing attack. Senior running back Shaquille Powell is a solid runner, and sophomore Shaun Wilson has breakaway speed. Redshirt sophomore Joe Ajeigbe handled his carries well last season.

But the big addition is the return of Jela Duncan, who missed last year to due to an academic issue. Duncan led Duke in combined rushing yards in 2012 and 2013, his freshman and sophomore seasons. He's also adept at catching the ball out of the backfield.

DEFENSE

Hold on to your hat for this comment, but Duke's athleticism in the secondary is on par

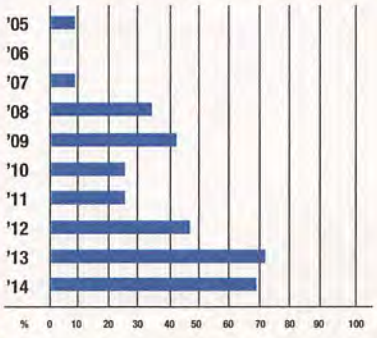
SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	'14 Record
Sept. 3	at Tulane	3-9
Sept. 12	NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL	7-5
Sept. 19	NORTHWESTERN	5-7
Sept. 26	GEORGIA TECH	11-3
Oct. 3	BOSTON COLLEGE	7-6
Oct. 10	at Army	4-8
Oct. 24	at Virginia Tech	7-6
Oct. 31	MIAMI	6-7
Nov. 7	at North Carolina	6-7
Nov. 14	PITTSBURGH	6-7
Nov. 21	at Virginia	5-7
Nov. 28	at Wake Forest	3-9

RESULTS

	9-4, 5-3	
W	ELON	52-13
W	at Troy	34-17
W	KANSAS	41-3
W	TULANE	47-13
L	at Miami	10-22
W	at Georgia Tech	31-25
W	VIRGINIA	20-13
W	at Pittsburgh (2OT)	51-48
W	at Syracuse	27-10
L	VIRGINIA TECH	16-17
L	NORTH CAROLINA	20-45
W	WAKE FOREST	41-21
	Sun Bowl	
L	vs. Arizona State	31-36

10-YEAR WINNING TREND



AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:
Durham, N.C.

2014:
9-4 overall, 5-3 ACC (2nd, Coastal)

COACH:
David Cutcliffe — At Duke: 40-48, 7 years; overall: 84-77, 13 years

RETURNING STARTERS:
14; 6 offense, 6 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH:
RB Shaquille Powell, WR Johnell Barnes, TE Braxton Deaver, C Matt Skura, LB Kelby Brown, DT Carlos Wray, S Jeremy Cash, S DeVon Edwards

PRIMARY STRENGTHS:
Duke has a solid stable of running backs, bolstered by Jela Duncan's return from academic suspension. Deaver and Brown are All-ACC talents who received a sixth year of eligibility. The secondary is athletic and experienced. The kicking game is among the ACC's best.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS:
The Blue Devils are breaking in a new quarterback, Thomas Sirk, who has yet to start a college game. On defense, Duke loses three of four starters on its defensive line — a position that hasn't traditionally been one of its best anyway.

KEY LOSSES:
QB Anthony Boone, WR Jamison Crowder, OL Laken Tomlinson, OL Takoby Cofield, DE Jordan DeWalt-Ondijo, DE Dezmond Johnson

OVERVIEW:
Losing multiple players to NFL camps is a sign of Duke's growth. The key will be how Duke replaces its departed stars as it seeks a fourth consecutive bowl trip. The Blue Devils' running game will be solid, the defense will be hard to pass against and special teams will be a plus. Sirk's development could be the difference between a good and great season.

KEY NUMBER:
3 Number of career touchdown passes thrown by all of Duke's quarterbacks. Sirk has all three from his backup role last season.

S
Jeremy
CASH

Photo by Joe Robbins

LB

KELBY BROWN

Photo by Steve Beyer

SCOUTING REPORT: Offense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
QB	Thomas Sirk	Jr.	Dual threat's development is crucial to offense.	Parker Boehme, So.
RB	**Shaquille Powell***	Sr.	Durable runner leads a strong group of backs.	Shaun Wilson, So.
WR	Chris Taylor	Fr.	Has breakaway speed to be Duke's top deep threat.	Anthony Nash, Jr.
WR	**Max McCaffrey***	Sr.	Exceptional route runner counted on in slot.	Ryan Smith, Jr.
WR	Johnell Barnes	Jr.	Speedy player gets his shot to make larger impact.	Trevon Lee, Fr.
TE	Braxton Deaver	Sr.	All-ACC talent returns after missing '14 with torn ACL.	**David Reeves, Sr.***
LT	Gabe Brandner	So.	Impressed in spring drills to win starting job.	Sterling Korona, So.
LG	**Lucas Patrick***	Sr.	Smart, physical player part of line's veteran core.	Jake Sanders, Fr.
C	**Matt Skura***	Sr.	Enters third season as starter as leader of line.	Austin Davis, So.
RG	Cody Robinson	Sr.	Will battle for starting job in fall camp with Stone.	Tanner Stone, Jr.
RT	**Casey Blaser***	Jr.	Showed smarts, physicality in first season as starter in '14.	Christian Harris, Fr.
PK	**Ross Martin***	Sr.	True weapon with strong leg perfect on extra points.	Danny Stirt, Jr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

SCOUTING REPORT: Defense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
DE	Kyler Brown	Sr.	Became an effective pass rusher after converting from LB.	Deion Williams, Sr.
DT	A.J. Wolf	Jr.	Won starting job with solid work in spring practice.	Quaven Ferguson, Fr.
DT	**Carlos Wray***	Sr.	Run-stuffer helps Duke defense thrive by tying up blockers.	Mike Ramsay, So.
DE	Britton Grier	Sr.	Another converted linebacker with good speed, size.	Allen Jackson, Jr.
LB	Kelby Brown	Sr.	Three-year, injury-plagued starter back for sixth season.	Zavier Carmichael, So.
LB	Dwayne Norman	Sr.	Converted safety brings athleticism, smarts to position.	Zavier Carmichael, So.
CB	**Bryon Fields***	Jr.	Adept cover corner also contributes well in run support.	Alonzo Saxton II, So.
CB	**Breon Borders***	Jr.	Already has seven interceptions in two seasons.	Zach Muiz, So.
S	**Deondre Singleton***	Jr.	Solid in pass coverage and effective against the run.	Evrett Edwards, So.
S	**Jeremy Cash***	Sr.	Hard-hitting ball-hawk is one of the nation's best.	Corbin McCarthy, Jr.
S	**DeVon Edwards***	Jr.	Has knack for making big plays here and in return game.	Phillip Carter, So.
P	**Will Monday***	Sr.	In conversation for tops in ACC due to leg strength.	Danny Stirt, Jr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

with anyone in the ACC this season.

The Blue Devils, who use a 4-2-5 scheme, return five defensive backs with starting experience. The best is senior safety Jeremy Cash, an All-ACC player who has made 232 tackles in the past two seasons combined.

Junior DeVon Edwards, a converted cornerback, plays at a safety position in Duke's scheme, and he's intercepted four passes over the last two seasons. Junior safety Deondre Singleton has developed into a strong player against the run.

The cornerbacks are juniors Breon Borders, who has seven career interceptions, and Bryon Fields, who is adept against the pass and the run.

Duke's defense will benefit greatly from the return of linebacker Kelby Brown, an All-ACC selection in 2013 when he compiled 114 tackles (11 for losses). Brown, who missed last season with a torn ACL, was granted a sixth season of eligibility.

Dwayne Norman, a converted defensive back, is the starter alongside Brown. Norman, a senior, showed run-stopping ability during his days as a safety. In Duke's scheme, playing linebacker calls for similar skills.

Duke's defensive questions are up front. The Blue Devils lost three starters from their line to graduation, returning only senior tackle Carlos Wray.

Duke had 29 sacks last season, its highest total under Cutcliffe. Players like Kyler Brown, A.J. Wolf and Britton Grier, reserves last season, will step into starting roles needing to produce larger numbers.

Young defensive tackles such as Quaven Ferguson, Edgar Cerenord and Mike Ramsay will get a chance to play and make an impact. At ends, senior Deion Williams and redshirt junior Allen Jackson will be counted on for depth, as coordinator Jim Knowles likes to use a heavy rotation.

With Kelby Brown behind them, as well as that talented secondary, the new faces on the line don't need to be elite playmakers; they just need to lock up their blockers long enough for others to make tackles. That's the base scheme for Duke.

If the guys on the line somehow excel at gaining penetration, then the defense could be special.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Duke has solidified its special teams units and has, perhaps, the top kicking and punting tandem in the ACC this season.

Senior Ross Martin has made all 108 of his extra-point kicks over the last two seasons and has missed just one in 155 career attempts. He's missed only four field goal attempts from 39 yards or closer in his career. He's also effective on deep balls, having made 4 of 6 career attempts from 50 yards or longer.

Senior punter Will Monday, an honorable mention All-American pick by *Sports Illustrated* last season, has averaged 43.5 yards per punt for his career. He's placed 57 punts inside the 20 in his three seasons.

NOTEBOOK

Duke football in Durham this season won't always be a pretty sight. The Blue Devils might still win, but they'll be doing so in a stadium in the midst of a massive, two-year renovation project.

The field at 86-year-old Wallace Wade Stadium was torn up and lowered six feet in the offseason, and the track was removed. The schools installed new seats closer to the field and put in a new video scoreboard.

More is coming.

A tower to house luxury suites, game operations staff and press facilities won't be built until 2016, and some sections of the stadium will be uninhabitable this season due to the construction.

• Early over-under lines were set by a sportsbook in May, with the number set at seven victories for Duke. From 1995 to 2012, the Blue Devils never went over seven wins in a season, but then they hit 10 in 2013 and nine last season. It also might be worth noting that Duke was a good bet last season against the point spread, matching its 9-4 straight-up record with an identical 9-4 record against the spread, one of the best marks in the nation.

• Duke last season started 8-1 and reached No. 19 in the Associated Press poll on Nov. 9 after a 27-10 win at Syracuse. That was the highest ranking for the program since the 1994 season. Duke promptly fell in the polls after reaching No. 19 with home losses to Virginia Tech and North Carolina.

• Sixth-year senior linebacker **Kelby Brown** has suffered three ACL tears in his career — two in his right knee and one in his left, sustained during a scrimmage in 2014 fall camp. Brown did not participate in spring practice. In the immediate aftermath of his third knee injury, he said he was inclined to give up football, but he decided about a month into last season to give it a try.

"Coach Cutcliffe was amazing throughout the entire time; he helped me find joy in the decision," Brown said in a statement at the time.

BLUE DEVILS SPRING ROSTER

Quarterbacks	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
13 Kane Banner	QB	6-2	190	Jr.	Lumberton
12 Parker Boehme	QB	6-2	220	So.	Jacksonville Beach, FL
6 Nicodem Pierre	QB	6-2	205	Fr.	Miami, FL
1 Thomas Sirk	QB	6-4	215	Jr.	Glen St. Mary, FL
Running Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
23 Joseph Ajeigbe	RB	5-9	210	So.	Riverside, CA
44 Zach Boden	RB	5-10	200	Jr.	Atlanta, GA
45 Jackson Conway	RB	5-10	215	Sr.	Bronxville, NY
25 Jela Duncan	RB	5-10	210	Jr.	Charlotte
28 Shaquille Powell	RB	5-10	205	Sr.	Las Vegas, NV
18 Eamonn Vain-Callahan	RB	5-9	195	Sr.	Severna Park, MD
29 Shaun Wilson	RB	5-9	180	So.	Charlotte
Wide Receivers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
86 Terrence Alls	WR	6-1	180	So.	Miami Gardens, FL
4 Johnell Barnes	WR	6-0	170	Jr.	Lehigh Acres, FL
14 Johndre Bennett	WR	5-11	200	Sr.	Pearcy, AR
19 Quay Chambers	WR	6-3	205	So.	Monroe
84 Trevon Lee	WR	6-1	175	Fr.	Plantation, FL
87 Max McCaffrey	WR	6-2	195	Sr.	Castle Rock, CO
17 Hud Mellencamp	WR	5-11	165	Sr.	Bloomington, IN
83 Anthony Nash	WR	6-5	200	Jr.	West Chester, PA
10 Ryan Smith	WR	5-7	165	Jr.	Las Vegas, NV
82 Chris Taylor	WR	6-1	170	Fr.	Miramar, FL
Tight Ends	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
85 Dan Beilinson	TE	6-5	255	Jr.	Cary
89 Braxton Deaver	TE	6-5	240	Sr.	Charlotte
49 Daniel Helm	TE	6-4	240	Fr.	Chatham, IL
81 Davis Koppenhaver	TE	6-4	210	So.	Valencia, CA
80 David Reeves	TE	6-5	255	Sr.	Greensboro, AL
88 Erich Schneider	TE	6-7	240	Jr.	Jacksonville Beach, FL
Offensive Linemen	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
60 Mike Fagan	OL	6-1	330	So.	Raleigh
63 Zach Harmon	OL	6-3	280	Fr.	Toledo, OH
70 Christian Harris	OL	6-6	290	Fr.	Suwanee, GA
74 Trip McNeill	OL	6-5	300	Fr.	Advance
72 Jake Sanders	OL	6-5	330	Fr.	Carrollton, GA
77 Kameron Schroeder	OL	6-5	275	Fr.	Elk Grove, CA
71 Casey Blaser	OT	6-5	285	Jr.	Charlotte
76 Gabe Brandner	OT	6-6	275	So.	Blythewood, SC
73 Reno Rosene	OT	6-7	335	Fr.	Westlake Village, CA
79 Tanner Stone	OT	6-6	300	Jr.	Dallas, TX
64 Jake Brodner	OG	6-2	245	Jr.	Glen Ellyn, IL
78 Sterling Korona	OG	6-7	290	So.	San Antonio, TX
67 Lucas Patrick	OG	6-4	305	Sr.	Brentwood, TN
65 Cody Robinson	OG	6-3	295	Sr.	McMinnville, TN
68 Alex Skidmore	OG	6-4	275	Jr.	Virginia Beach, VA
50 Austin Davis	C	6-4	285	So.	Mansfield, TX
62 Matt Skura	C	6-4	305	Sr.	Columbus, OH

Defensive Linemen	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
92 Edgar Cerenord	DT	6-1	300	Fr.	Miami, FL
97 Quaven Ferguson	DT	6-2	305	Fr.	Easley, SC
96 Allen Jackson	DT	6-5	260	Jr.	Ellicott City, MD
99 Mike Ramsay	DT	6-2	295	So.	Smyrna, GA
46 Keilin Rayner	DT	6-3	260	Jr.	Leland
93 A.J. Wolf	DT	6-4	270	Jr.	Greenwich, CT
98 Carlos Wray	DT	6-2	290	Sr.	Shelby
56 Kyler Brown	DE	6-4	245	Sr.	Matthews
49 Danny Doyle	DE	6-1	200	So.	Bradenton, FL
22 Britton Grier	DE	6-1	245	Sr.	Charlotte
58 Michael Mann	DE	6-4	235	Jr.	Castle Rock, CO
91 Marquies Price	DE	6-6	225	Fr.	Fort Valley, GA
90 Taariq Shabazz	DE	6-3	225	Fr.	Kennesaw, GA
48 Deion Williams	DE	6-0	230	Sr.	Long Beach, CA
Linebackers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
43 Tinashe Bere	LB	6-1	220	Fr.	Cincinnati, OH
59 Kelby Brown	LB	6-2	230	Sr.	Matthews
24 Zavier Carmichael	LB	6-0	210	So.	Eight Mile, AL
30 Danny Fowler	LB	5-11	190	So.	Wantagh, NY
32 Chris Holmes	LB	6-2	215	So.	Fredericksburg, VA
51 Dominic McDonald	LB	6-2	240	So.	Longwood, FL
50 Wyatt Smith	LB	6-0	220	Jr.	Fort Myers, FL
Defensive Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
31 Breon Borders	CB	6-0	175	Jr.	Statesville
17 Jamie Cockey	CB	5-8	175	Sr.	Montclair, NJ
11 T.J. Douglas	CB	6-1	185	So.	Fort Myers, FL
14 Bryon Fields	CB	5-11	180	Jr.	Charlotte
5 Johnathan Lloyd	CB	6-0	190	Fr.	Graham
39 Zach Muñiz	CB	5-11	170	So.	Chesterfield, MO
21 Alonzo Saxton II	CB	5-11	170	So.	Columbus, OH
37 Phillip Carter	S	6-1	195	So.	El Dorado Hills, CA
16 Jeremy Cash	S	6-2	205	Sr.	Miami, FL
36 Christian Conway	S	5-10	200	Sr.	Bronxville, NY
27 DeVon Edwards	S/CB	5-9	175	Jr.	Covington, GA
2 Evrett Edwards	S/CB	5-11	190	So.	Woodbridge, VA
38 Grant Hall	S	5-10	180	Jr.	Suwanee, GA
20 Jake Kite	S	6-0	185	So.	Roanoke, VA
15 Quay Mann	S	5-9	190	So.	Rocky Mount
26 Corbin McCarthy	S	5-10	200	Jr.	Norco, CA
40 Dwayne Norman	S	6-1	210	Sr.	Jacksonville, FL
33 Deondre Singleton	S	5-11	180	Jr.	Dacula, GA
45 Kyle Wellner	S	6-2	210	Jr.	Mill Neck, NY
Specialists	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
35 Ross Martin	K	5-10	185	Sr.	Solon, OH
43 Danny Stirt	K/P	5-10	165	Jr.	Gainesville, FL
13 Collin Wareham	K	5-9	175	So.	McLean, VA
12 Will Kline	P/K	5-11	190	So.	Montclair, NJ
41 Will Monday	P	6-4	210	Sr.	Flowery Branch, GA
69 Bronson Bruneau	LS	6-5	225	So.	Lakeville, MN
61 Colin Duffy	LS	6-0	200	So.	Newport Beach, CA
57 Thomas Hennessy	LS	6-3	235	Jr.	Bardonia, NY

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	32.4	40
Rushing	181.8	46
Passing	216.5	77
Total	398.3	66

DEFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	21.8	T-24
Rushing	192.9	92
Passing	206.8	33
Total	399.7	67

TO MARGIN	PER GAME	RANK
+ 6	+ 0.46	T-33

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	GP	Effic	Cmp	Att	Int	Pct	Yards	TD	Long	Avg/G
Anthony Boone	13	116.7	255	453	8	56.3	2700	19	54	207.7
Thomas Sirk	12	182.3	10	14	0	71.4	67	3	18	5.6

RECEIVING

NAME	GP	No.	Yards	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
Jamison Crowder	13	85	1044	12.3	6	52	80.3
Issac Blakeney	13	47	559	11.9	7	54	43.0
Max McCaffrey	13	37	385	10.4	3	36	29.6

RUSHING

NAME	GP	Att.	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
Shaquille Powell	12	134	622	4	618	4.6	2	17	51.5
Shaun Wilson	13	78	604	6	598	7.7	5	69	46.0
Josh Snead	13	81	417	16	401	5.0	3	19	30.8

DEF. LEADERS

Tackles: D. Helton 134, D. Edwards 133, J. Cash 111
Tackles for loss: J. Cash 10.5, D. Edwards 7.5, J. DeWalt-Ondijo 7.5
Sacks: J. Cash 5.5, D. Edwards 4.5, J. DeWalt-Ondijo 4.5
Interceptions: B. Borders 3, J. Cash 2, Z. Carmichael 2

247SPORTS BLUE DEVILS RECRUITING 2015

3 NEWCOMERS OF IMPACT

Ben Humphreys

Outrageously versatile with the ability to play cornerback on the island or mix it up in the box. The playmaking four-star 'backer makes things happen. The U.S. Army All-American has the goods to be one of Duke's top overall players in the years to come.

TJ Rahming

Another rare U.S. Army All-American for the Blue Devils. Like Humphreys, he shined in the nation's top all-star game. Rahming has the burst to take a quick screen 50 yards to the house and the top-end speed to beat all comers deep. Adds a major explosive element to Duke's attack.

Brandon Boyce

An interior plugger that comes in from national powerhouse Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) St. Thomas Aquinas with super power and explosion. A steal for Duke's program. Boyce plays with tremendous pad level and fires off the ball.

SLEEPER

Twazanga Mugala

An edge rusher with upside that has a frame to only get bigger. Well-coached on the prep level. Mugala, a former Purdue commit, is long and can amp up Duke's pass-rush in the years ahead.

2016 NEEDS

Duke will look to continue on its hot streak nationally and try to pull the best they can get in academically, stretching from border to border. Adding an elite receiver, a stud tight end, size along the offensive line, and talented depth at running back and linebacker will be the positions of emphasis.

— Ryan Bartow

247SPORTS COMPOSITE

0	1	15	2
✪✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪	✪✪

Commitments	18
Average Stars	2.94
Total Stars	53
National Rank: 50	ACC: 10

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Zach Baker	OC	6-3	290	✪✪✪	Green Cove Springs, FL	Clay
Ranked as the nation's No. 17 center and No. 179 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Earned all-county, all-district, all-region and second team Florida All-State Class 5A honors.						
Brandon Boyce	DT	5-11	255	✪✪✪	Fort Lauderdale, FL	St. Thomas Aquinas
Ranked as the nation's No. 72 defensive tackle and No. 156 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 87 tackles with 22.5 for loss, including 10.5 sacks, and added four caused fumbles as a junior.						
Brandon Feamster	S	6-3	203	✪✪✪	Cheshire, CT	The Cheshire Academy
Ranked as the nation's No. 144 safety and No. 13 prospect in Connecticut according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 31 tackles and three interceptions as a senior … Selected to play in the 2013 Big 33 Football Classic.						
Keyston Fuller	WR	5-11	180	✪✪✪	Griffin, GA	Griffin
Ranked as the nation's No. 70 wide receiver and No. 59 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 61 receptions for 974 yards and 11 touchdowns as a senior… First-team all-state selection.						
Joe Giles-Harris	OLB	6-2	210	✪✪✪	Montvale, NJ	St. Joseph Regional
Ranked as the nation's No. 54 outside linebacker and No. 21 prospect in New Jersey according to the 247Sports Composite… Registered 95 tackles, 3.0 sacks, four interceptions, two caused fumbles, two fumble recoveries and two blocked punts as a senior.						
Quentin Harris	QB	6-0	185	✪✪✪	Watertown, CT	The Taft School
Ranked as the nation's No. 32 dual-threat quarterback and No. 6 prospect in Connecticut according to the 247Sports Composite… Named team's most valuable player after completing 159 of 295 passes for 1,642 yards with 14 touchdowns in 2014.						
Jordan Hayes	S	5-11	165	✪✪✪	Loganville, GA	Grayson
Ranked as the nation's No. 87 safety and No. 122 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Served as team captain as a senior… Racked up 91 tackles with 19 pass breakups and five interceptions in 2014.						
Ben Humphreys	OLB	6-1	200	✪✪✪✪	Santa Ana, CA	Mater Dei
U.S. Army All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 164 prospect overall, No. 10 outside linebacker and No. 25 prospect in California according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 75 tackles with four interceptions and two forced fumbles as a senior.						
Daniel Jones	QB	6-5	190	✪✪	Charlotte	Charlotte Latin School
Ranked as the nation's No. 60 dual-threat quarterback and No. 64 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite.						
Jeremy McDuffie	CB	5-11	170	✪✪✪	Snellville, GA	Shiloh
Ranked as the nation's No. 58 cornerback and No. 63 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded 70 tackles, 10 pass breakups and two interceptions in eight games as a senior.						
Trevon McSwain	WDE	6-5	255	✪✪✪	Suwanee, GA	Lambert
Ranked as the nation's No. 27 weakside defensive end and No. 58 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded 21 tackles with one sack, one interception and one fumble recovered as a senior.						
Zach Morris	SDE	6-3	295	✪✪✪	Ringgold, GA	Ringgold
Ranked as the nation's No. 51 strongside defensive end and No. 91 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Earned first team all-state honors from the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* and honorable mention Class AAA all-state accolades by the Georgia Sports Writers Association.						
Twazanga Mugala	WDE	6-3	230	✪✪✪	Charlotte	Ardrey Kell
Ranked as the nation's No. 74 weakside defensive end and No. 54 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded a school-record 16.5 sacks to go along with 109 tackles, 34.0 tackles for loss, 29 quarterback pressures and two forced fumbles as a senior.						
Austin Parker	P	6-1	170	✪✪	Mount Pleasant	Mount Pleasant
Ranked as the nation's No. 90 punter and No. 60 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Named the Rockey River Conference Special Teams Player of the Year as a senior.						
Marquies Price	SDE	6-6	225	✪✪✪	Fort Valley, GA	Peach County
Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 46 strongside defensive end and No. 85 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded 37 tackles with six sacks and two caused fumbles as a senior and 49 tackles, including three sacks and three forced fumbles as a junior.						
TJ Rahming	WR	5-8	149	✪✪✪	Powder Springs, GA	McEachern
U.S. Army All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 60 wide receiver and No. 48 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Caught 70 passes for 1,548 yards and 22 touchdowns as a senior.						
Reno Rosene	OT	6-6	335	✪✪✪	Thousand Oaks, CA	Oaks Christian
Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 62 offensive tackle and No. 66 prospect in California according to the 247Sports Composite… Named first team All-Ventura County and first team all-league as a senior.						
Aaron Young	WR	6-4	200	✪✪✪	Murrieta, CA	Murrieta Valley
Ranked as the nation's No. 98 wide receiver and No. 96 prospect in California according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 61 receptions for 1,083 yards and 16 touchdowns as a senior.						

PLAYER PROFILE

QB Sirk Looks To Keep Bowl Streak Alive

Sean Renfree finally got Duke to a bowl game. Anthony Boone led the Blue Devils to two others.

Following in their footsteps as Duke's starting quarterback will be Thomas Sirk, who is charged with continuing Duke's unprecedented run of three consecutive bowl appearances.

Sirk, a redshirt junior with no career starts, used spring drills to solidify his hold on the starting job.

"He's taken it upon himself of what you want to see a starting quarterback be," coach David Cutcliffe said during spring practice. "He is in command. He's in command of what he's doing. He's in command of the offense."

During his game action, Sirk wasn't asked to perform like an all-around quarterback. He ran the ball 47 times while attempting just 14 passes in those short-yardage sets. But he did complete 10 of those passes for an impressive accuracy of 71.4 percent.

But Cutcliffe said there's far more to Sirk's game than he was able to show last season.

"Thomas is 6-4," Cutcliffe said. "He's got a big arm. He's a great deep-ball thrower; not good, but a great deep-ball thrower. The thing I've been most pleased with and, not surprisingly, his throwing has improved from last fall. He has worked."

While working on the field to master Duke's entire offense, Sirk used spring practices to find his footing as a team leader. He brings a far different voice to the team than his two predecessors.

The cerebral Renfree was soft-spoken as far as quarterbacks go. The gregarious Boone led with his voice and his play while taking the Blue Devils to heights the program had never seen in ACC play.

Sirk?

"He is somewhere in the middle," Cutcliffe said.

"Sean was so quiet and reserved. Anthony was always seemingly having fun. I think Thomas is kind of your warm person, sincere about everything. His humility is a great personality trait because it is real. Yet he's fiercely competitive and will speak up in a leadership role."

Photo by Thomas Sirk

Sirk feels the importance of his new position.

"There is more responsibility," Sirk said. "I haven't really changed. I'm not trying to change who I am. I'm trying to stay who I am and keep leading like I do. The biggest thing for me is trying to learn more and more about each person on the offense and how they handle adversity and respond to different things."

BEST AND BRIGHTEST

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

S DEVON EDWARDS

Take your pick here: S Jeremy Cash or Edwards. ... Edwards, an All-ACC selection last season, logged 133 tackles, second in the league. He also forced five fumbles in 2014. ... Bonus points to Edwards for being a factor in the return game, where he's already returned three kickoffs for touchdowns over his first two seasons while averaging 25.7 yards per return. ... He's a superior athlete with a solid work ethic and strong attention to detail.

EMERGING STAR

WR JOHNELL BARNES

The speedy 6-0, 170-pound junior was the team's fourth-leading receiver with 23 catches for 237 yards last season. ... Caught his first TD pass against Arizona State in the fourth quarter of the Sun Bowl. ... Best game was a six-catch, 85-yard performance against North Carolina. ... Four of his catches last season were for 29 yards or longer. ... The loss of Jamison Crowder and Issac Blakeney to graduation means Barnes could become Duke's top threat in the passing game.

TOP NEWCOMER

DE MARQUIES PRICE

The true freshman from Fort Valley, Ga., enrolled in January and took part in spring drills. ... At 6-6, 225, he has the build to add bulk. But even at that weight, he was effective enough as a speed pass rusher in spring drills that the coaches believe he can contribute this season. ... A three-star recruit, Price picked Duke over offers from Wisconsin, Georgia Tech, NC State and Kentucky, among others.

Photos courtesy of Duke Athletics.

Cornerback DeVon Edwards is a threat in the kick return game, having returned three kicks for touchdowns over the last two years. Jamison Crowder's departure is a blow to the punt return game, where the steady but not spectacular Max McCaffrey is set to replace him.

SCHEDULE ANALYSIS

As was the case in the last two seasons, Duke has a manageable non-conference schedule and will benefit from an ACC schedule that doesn't include the league's top teams.

Duke's four games outside the ACC are against Tulane, N.C. Central, Army West Point and Northwestern. None of those teams played in bowls last season although NCCU (7-5) did post a winning record in the Football Championship Subdivision.

Clemson, Florida State and Louisville are missing from Duke's ACC slate as its Atlantic Division crossover games are with Boston College (7-6 last season) and Wake Forest (3-9).

Duke gets reigning ACC Coastal champion Georgia Tech at home after beating the Yellow Jackets in Atlanta last season. But the Blue Devils have road games at *Lindy's* preseason Top 25 Virginia Tech, as well as North Carolina.

— Steve Wiseman

FLORIDA STATE SEMINOLES

For more coverage of the Seminoles, visit floridastate.247Sports.com

OFFENSIVE COORDINATORS: Randy Sanders, Lawrence Dawsey **DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR:** Charles Kelly **STADIUM:** Doak Campbell Stadium: 82,300

NEW-LOOK FSU AIMS FOR SAME OLD ACC DOMINANCE

Florida State's winning streak was bound to end sometime. But that glorious 29-game ride ended in a crash when the Seminoles lost to Oregon 59-20 in a College Football Playoff semifinal, victimized by a turnover-filled second half.

When the dust settled, and Heisman Trophy winner Jameis Winston was part of a group of five players who left early for the NFL Draft, Jimbo Fisher had to move forward for the first time in his tenure as a head coach after losing a bowl game.

"They don't like that image of themselves," Fisher said.

There would be no hangover from that 39-point loss.

Fisher and his staff completed a signing class that was ranked No. 3 in the nation by 247Sports and included eight players who enrolled early. Fisher saw a focused team this spring with a renewed energy. And in May, Notre Dame graduate transfer quarterback Everett Golson declared he would play his final season at Florida State.

So, not a bad offseason.

But FSU will look dramatically different on offense, having to replace eight starters. Gone is Winston, who went 26-1 as a starter and threw for 75 touchdowns. Gone is Rashad Greene, the school's career leader in receptions and receiving yards. Gone is tight end Nick O'Leary, a Mackey Award winner. And gone is almost every offensive lineman of note.

FSU will be short on experience on offense, but Fisher has stockpiled talent with top 10 recruiting classes the past few years. Now is the time for many freshmen and sophomores to take on more responsibility.

"I am really excited about this team," Fisher said. "I think we have a chance to be a very good team."

OFFENSE

Fisher ended spring by leaving open the quarterback competition, and then he added Notre Dame transfer Everett Golson. In spring practice, it was clear that junior Sean Maguire was ahead of J.J. Cosentino, De'Andre Johnson and John Franklin.

Fisher consistently praised Maguire for his accuracy and poise, as well as his leadership. His edge is experience in the system, a gap that the strong-armed Golson will try to close in fall camp.

Maguire has a start against Clemson last September under his belt, a game in which he often misfired as the line struggled to protect him. While he threw two interceptions, he remained composed and had 304 passing yards and a touchdown in the overtime win.

FSU's young receivers hadn't blossomed yet, but now they have a year in the offense and should be ready to emerge. Travis Rudolph is the best of the group, often drawing comparisons to Rashad Greene. But FSU has a wealth of talent beyond Rudolph with Jesus Wilson, Ermon Lane, Ja'Vonn Harrison, George Campbell and Da'Vante Phillips.

Fisher wants to see more physicality and consistency from the receivers.

Fisher is known for developing quarterbacks, but he also embraces the run and wants his pro-style offense to be balanced.

Dalvin Cook ran for 1,008 yards and eight touchdowns last season as a true freshman in just 13 games. Displaying toughness as he broke tackles at the line, he frequently found openings in defenses ... and then used a burst to break off big gains. Cook accumulated 738 rushing yards and five touchdowns in the final seven games.

Cook watched all of FSU's games again during the offseason, re-living the two second-half fumbles in the loss to Oregon.

"It killed me to watch it," Cook said.

But Fisher and the Seminoles have confidence in Cook, who could be a workhorse back and one of the best in the country in 2015. He is looking to become FSU's first back-to-back 1,000-yard rusher since Warrick Dunn in 1994-96.

Despite losing four starting offensive linemen, Fisher said he was pleased with how the backups have evolved into starters. Left tackle Roderick Johnson anchors a line that should feature two junior college blockers in right tackle Chad Mavety and left guard Kareem Are.

One concern is at center, where FSU had a half dozen shotgun snaps during the spring

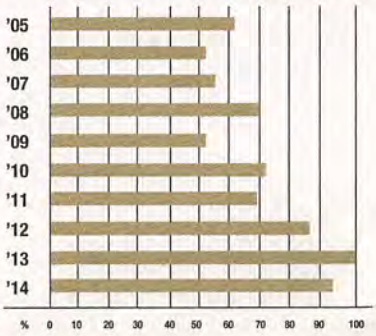
SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	'14 Record
Sept. 5	TEXAS STATE	7-5
Sept. 12	SOUTH FLORIDA	4-8
Sept. 18	at Boston College	7-6
Oct. 3	at Wake Forest	3-9
Oct. 10	MIAMI	6-7
Oct. 17	LOUISVILLE	9-4
Oct. 24	at Georgia Tech	11-3
Oct. 31	SYRACUSE	3-9
Nov. 7	at Clemson	10-3
Nov. 14	NC STATE	8-5
Nov. 21	CHATTANOOGA	10-4
Nov. 28	at Florida	7-5

RESULTS

13-1, 8-0		
W	vs. Oklahoma State (Arlington, TX)	37-31
W	THE CITADEL	37-12
W	CLEMSON	23-17
W	at NC State	56-41
W	WAKE FOREST	43-3
W	at Syracuse	38-20
W	NOTRE DAME	31-27
W	at Louisville	42-31
W	VIRGINIA	34-20
W	at Miami	30-26
W	BOSTON COLLEGE	20-17
W	FLORIDA	24-19
ACC Championship Game		
W	vs. Georgia Tech	37-35
Rose Bowl - Semifinal		
L	vs. Oregon	20-59

10-YEAR WINNING TREND



AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:
Tallahassee, Fla.

2014:
13-1 overall, 8-0 ACC (1st, Atlantic)

COACH:
Jimbo Fisher — At FSU and overall: 58-11, 5 years

RETURNING STARTERS:
12; 3 offense, 7 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH:
QB Everett Golson, QB Sean Maguire, RB Dalvin Cook, RB Jacques Patrick, WR Travis Rudolph, DT Derrick Mitchell, LB Terrance Smith, CB Jalen Ramsey

PRIMARY STRENGTHS:
FSU's secondary is one of the nation's best with Ramsey, safety Nate Andrews and newcomer Derwin James. The 'Noles have a deep group of running backs with Cook, Patrick and Mario Pender. The receivers are inexperienced, but talented.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS:
FSU's offense won't be the same without its 2013 Heisman Trophy winner (QB Jameis Winston), the school's all-time receptions leader (WR Rashad Greene) and the 2014 Mackey Award winner (TE Nick O'Leary). And four starters on the offensive line have moved on to the NFL. The lack of a pass rush (17 sacks in 2014) could again haunt FSU.

KEY LOSSES:
QB Jameis Winston, WR Rashad Greene, TE Nick O'Leary, C Cameron Erving, G Tre' Jackson, DE Mario Edwards Jr., DT Eddie Goldman, CB PJ Williams, CB Ronald Darby

OVERVIEW:
Expectations remain high for Florida State after a three-year stretch in which the program won 39 games. There will be a learning curve, but less so if Golson can step in seamlessly at quarterback. A win at Clemson is probably a must, but there's enough talent on offense and defense for FSU to put together a 10-win season and win its fourth straight ACC title.

KEY NUMBER:
164 Combined starts of the offensive linemen that FSU lost to the NFL Draft.

CB
Jalen
RAMSEY

Photo by John Pyle

Photo by Joe Robbins

SCOUTING REPORT: Offense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
QB	Everett Golson	Sr.	Talent, experience beats out Maguire's playbook knowledge.	Sean Maguire, Jr.
RB	Dalvin Cook	So.	Averaged 5.9 yards per carry as freshman.	Mario Pender, Jr.
FB	**Freddie Stevenson***	Jr.	Mostly a blocking back, but can catch passes.	Johnathan Vickers, So.
WR	**Travis Rudolph***	So.	Had 38 catches in 2014, but now must be No. 1 receiver.	Ja'Vonn Harrison, So.
WR	**Jesus Wilson***	Jr.	Just 5-9, but a tough, physical slot receiver.	Ermon Lane, So.
TE	Ryan Izzo	Fr.	Athletic 6-6 pass-catcher is an improved blocker.	Mavin Saunders, Fr.
LT	Roderick Johnson	So.	Only lineman with starting experience (five starts).	Ethan Frith, Fr.
LG	Kareem Are	Jr.	Nasty, physical blocker who is 6-6, 330 pounds.	Corey Martinez, Fr.
C	Alec Eberle	Fr.	Must improve his consistency as blocker.	Ryan Hoefeld, So.
RG	Wilson Bell	So.	Earned frequent praise from coaches in spring.	Derrick Kelly, Fr.
RT	Chad Mavety	Jr.	At 6-5, 327 pounds is physical and athletic.	Brock Ruble, Fr.
PK	**Roberto Aguayo***	Jr.	2013 Groza winner has made 48 of 52 career FGs.	Ryan Feely, Fr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

SCOUTING REPORT: Defense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
DE	**DeMarcus Walker***	Jr.	Made progress in 2014, but must improve vs. run.	Lorenzo Featherston, So.
DT	**Derrick Mitchell Jr.***	Sr.	Healthy for first time in 2014 and showed promise.	Derrick Nnadi, So.
DT	Nile Lawrence-Stample	Sr.	Effective, but missed 10 games with torn pectoral in 2014.	Demarcus Christmas, Fr.
DE	Jacob Pugh	So.	Talented, versatile player who can also play LB.	Chris Casher, Jr.
LB	**Terrance Smith***	Sr.	Athletic player who had 87 tackles in 12 games.	Matthew Thomas, So.
LB	**Reggie Northrup***	Sr.	Led FSU with 122 tackles in first year as starter.	Tyrell Lyons, So.
CB	**Jalen Ramsey***	Jr.	Playmaker now looks to become lock-down corner.	Ryan Green, Jr.
CB	Marquez White	Jr.	Thriving after giving up college hoops aspirations.	Malique Jackson, So.
STAR	Trey Marshall	So.	Coaches see similarities to Ramsey in this versatile DB.	Derwin James, Fr.
SS	**Tyler Hunter***	Sr.	Strong leader who is considered a coach on the field.	Lamarcus Brutus, Sr.
FS	**Nate Andrews***	Jr.	Effective in run support, had 93 tackles.	Derwin James, Fr.
P	**Cason Beatty***	Sr.	Averaged 41 yards per punt; needs more consistency.	Jonathan Hernandez, So.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

game that were too high or low, throwing off the quarterback's timing.

DEFENSE

FSU's pass rush was one of the program's hallmarks just a few years ago, as the likes of Bjoern Werner, Brandon Jenkins and Cornellius Carradine pressured quarterbacks. But the Seminoles have struggled to record sacks, falling from 35 in 2013 to just 17 last season.

When defensive ends coach Sal Sunseri left in January to become an assistant with the Oakland Raiders, Fisher moved quickly to hire Florida assistant Brad Lawing. With a resume that includes being the position coach to South Carolina's Jadeveon Clowney and Florida's Dante Fowler, Lawing is tasked with coaching FSU's ends and outside linebackers.

"We know we have to improve our pass rush," Lawing said. "We're going to."

Defensive end DeMarcus Walker could lead the way toward that improvement after a 38-tackle performance as a sophomore.

One wild card is the health of Josh Sweat, the No. 1 defensive end recruit in the class of 2015. Sweat enrolled early and was going through injury rehab after dislocating his left kneecap and tearing an ACL as a high school senior in 2014. Fisher has said it's too early to tell if Sweat will need to redshirt.

FSU will start two seniors at linebacker in Terrance Smith and Reggie Northrup. Smith is a versatile talent who played through a knee injury last season. Northrup is a run-stopper who led FSU with 122 tackles. Matthew Thomas, a five-star prospect from the 2013 class, had 26 tackles last season but has battled ankle and shoulder injuries.

The defensive backfield is among the best in the nation, despite losing starting corners P.J. Williams and Ronald Darby. Fisher chose to move Jalen Ramsey from the star/nickel position to boundary corner, where he will be an imposing, physical presence who makes life miserable for opponent's No. 1 receivers.

While FSU has two veterans at safety in Nate Andrews and Tyler Hunter, Derwin James was considered the nation's top defensive back in the class of 2015 and will make a push for a starting role.

Trey Marshall has the talent and versatility to step into Ramsey's old star position, where he can use his skills to rush the passer, defend the run or drop into coverage.

SPECIAL TEAMS

If possible, place-kicker Roberto Aguayo will be even more valuable this season, if a new-look offense has trouble punching the ball into the end zone. Aguayo, who won the Lou Groza Award in 2013 as a freshman, has made 48 of 52 field goal attempts in his career. He has not missed a kick inside 39 yards at FSU.

In the spring game, Aguayo made a 56-yard attempt. That's an indication that

NOTEBOOK

Florida State's quarterback competition in the spring of 2013 was wide open.

Clint Trickett had experience and was looking to win a competition that included **Jameis Winston** and **Jacob Coker**. **Sean Maguire** was often overlooked or ignored.

He's the only one of those four still left in Tallahassee.

Trickett graduated, transferred and became a 3,000-yard passer at West Virginia. Coker graduated in the summer of 2014 and transferred to Alabama. Winston won the Heisman Trophy and the national title and will be an NFL rookie in 2015.

"I've learned so much from two springs ago to now," Maguire said. "I got to see Jameis, Clint and Coker play and take a little bit from each of them."

Maguire, though, once again could be overlooked, eclipsed by Notre Dame transfer **Everett Golson**. That will be determined in fall camp.

In the spring, coach **Jimbo Fisher** expressed confidence in Maguire.

"I'm very comfortable with Sean right now," Fisher said. "Sean had a great spring. ... I like where he's at right now."

Maguire was asked in the spring if FSU now felt like "his team."

"Yes," Maguire said. "I believe so."

• Until Everett Golson came along, Florida State's most intriguing newcomer was freshman running back **Jacques Patrick**, who enrolled early. Patrick (6-1, 232) ran for 81 yards on 16 carries in the spring game.

Patrick was a consensus four-star tailback in high school, running for 2,576 yards and 32 touchdowns as a senior at Orlando (Fla.) Timber Creek High. He was chosen as the Florida Gatorade Player of the Year in 2014.

• Backup redshirt sophomore quarterback **John Franklin III** announced in late May that he planned to transfer. The addition of Everett Golson wasn't really a factor; this decision was more about playing time beyond this season, which looked limited for Franklin with other young quarterbacks in the fold.

• How much of a concern is an offensive line that does not have one full-time returning starter? "The offensive line is much farther along than I thought it would be," Fisher said after spring ball. "I really like our group up front."

SEMINOLES SPRING ROSTER

Quarterbacks	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
21 Lucas Clark	QB	6-1	198	Jr.	Fort Walton Beach
19 Troy Cook	QB	6-2	207	So.	Miami
16 J.J. Cosentino	QB	6-4	237	Fr.	Pittsburgh, PA
Everett Golson	QB	6-0	200	Sr.	Myrtle Beach, SC
14 De'Andre Johnson	QB	6-0	177	Fr.	Jacksonville
10 Sean Maguire	QB	6-3	224	Jr.	Sparta, NJ
Running Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
4 Dalvin Cook	RB	6-0	203	So.	Miami
9 Jacques Patrick	RB	6-1	232	Fr.	Orlando
7 Mario Pender	RB	5-10	204	Jr.	Cape Coral
22 Johnathan Vickers	RB	6-1	215	So.	Quincy
32 Steven Williams	RB	5-10	162	Jr.	Naples
23 Freddie Stevenson	FB	6-1	244	Jr.	Bartow
Wide Receivers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
6 George Campbell	WR	6-3	197	Fr.	Clearwater
18 Christian Griffith	WR	6-6	212	Sr.	Palm Beach
13 Ja'Vonn Harrison	WR	6-2	199	So.	Lakeland
38 Chet Iwuagwu	WR	5-10	182	Fr.	Tallahassee
87 Jared Jackson	WR	6-3	190	So.	Monticello
84 Isaiah Jones	WR	6-4	194	So.	Milton
82 Bryan LaCivita	WR	6-1	183	So.	Gainesville
1 Ermon Lane	WR	6-3	205	So.	Homestead
86 Justin Motlow	WR	5-11	181	Fr.	Tampa
5 Da'Vante Phillips	WR	6-1	203	Fr.	Miami
15 Travis Rudolph	WR	6-2	187	So.	West Palm Beach
8 Kermit Whitfield	WR	5-7	183	Jr.	Orlando
3 Jesus Wilson	WR	5-9	181	Jr.	Miami
Tight Ends	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
81 Ryan Izzo	TE	6-6	243	Fr.	Highland Lakes, NJ
85 Jeremy Kerr	TE	6-5	261	So.	St. Petersburg
49 Brandyn Musgrave	TE	6-0	228	Sr.	Port St. Lucie
88 Mavin Saunders	TE	6-6	258	Fr.	Bimini Bahamas
46 Jayon Young	TE	6-1	236	Jr.	Coral Springs
Offensive Linemen	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
72 Kareem Are	OL	6-6	330	Jr.	Floral Park, NY
78 Wilson Bell	OL	6-4	318	So.	Mobile, AL
76 Marcel Benalcazar	OL	6-6	314	So.	Miramar
54 Alec Eberle	OL	6-5	294	Fr.	Mechanicsville, VA
62 Ethan Frith	OL	6-7	299	Fr.	Summit, MS
59 Ryan Hoefeld	OL	6-3	293	So.	New Orleans, LA
77 Roderick Johnson	OL	6-7	312	So.	Florissant, MO
74 Derrick Kelly	OL	6-5	310	Fr.	Havana
57 Corey Martinez	OL	6-5	293	Fr.	Tampa
55 Chad Mavety	OL	6-5	327	Jr.	Sparta, NJ
71 Brock Ruble	OL	6-8	313	Fr.	La Plata, MD
66 Keith Weeks	OL	6-4	301	Jr.	Valrico
Defensive Linemen	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
95 Keith Bryant	DT	6-2	304	So.	Delray Beach
90 Demarcus Christmas	DT	6-3	302	Fr.	Bradenton
55 Fredrick Jones	DT	6-2	311	Fr.	Miami
99 Nile Lawrence-Stample	DT	6-1	323	Sr.	Fort Lauderdale
11 Derrick Mitchell, Jr.	DT	6-4	307	Sr.	Jacksonville
4 Giorgio Newberry	DT	6-6	289	Sr.	Fort Pierce
91 Derrick Nnadi	DT	6-2	304	So.	Virginia Beach, VA
92 Justin Shanks	DT	6-2	325	Jr.	Prattville, AL
67 Adam Torres	DT	6-4	279	Fr.	Lake Mary
12 Arthur Williams	DT	6-5	321	Fr.	Fayetteville, NC
21 Chris Casher	DE	6-4	249	Jr.	Mobile, AL
41 Lorenzo Featherston	DE	6-7	229	So.	Greensboro, NC
98 Rick Leonard	DE	6-7	273	So.	Middletown, MD
9 Josh Sweat	DE	6-5	226	Fr.	Chesapeake, VA
91 Anthony Valdes	DE	6-1	233	Jr.	Royal Palm Beach
44 DeMarcus Walker	DE	6-3	277	Jr.	Jacksonville
Linebackers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
73 Joseph Hernandez	LB	6-0	213	Jr.	Miami Beach
18 Ro'Derrick Hoskins	LB	6-2	234	So.	Orlando
5 Reggie Northrup	LB	6-1	226	Sr.	Jacksonville
40 Nick Patti	LB	6-1	222	Fr.	Fairhope, AL
56 Novisa Petrusich	LB	6-0	224	So.	St. Petersburg
16 Jacob Pugh	LB	6-4	247	So.	Tallahassee
45 Delvin Purifoy	LB	6-2	254	Fr.	Cantonment
24 Terrance Smith	LB	6-4	231	Sr.	Decatur, GA
6 Matthew Thomas	LB	6-3	224	So.	Miami
Defensive Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
29 Nate Andrews	DB	5-11	204	Jr.	Fairhope, AL
30 Colin Blake	DB	6-3	204	Jr.	San Antonio, TX
10 Calvin Brewton	DB	6-0	178	Fr.	Miami
42 Lamarcus Brutus	DB	6-0	208	Sr.	Port St. Lucie
31 Tres Copeland	DB	5-11	178	So.	Madison
20 Alfredo Davis	DB	6-3	203	So.	Miami
35 Reginald Dixon, Jr.	DB	5-10	197	Jr.	Tallahassee
14 Javien Elliott	DB	5-11	176	Sr.	Panama City
7 Ryan Green	DB	5-10	198	Jr.	St. Petersburg
1 Tyler Hunter	DB	5-11	204	Sr.	Valdosta, GA
28 Malique Jackson	DB	6-1	171	So.	Jesup, GA
3 Derwin James	DB	6-2	212	Fr.	Haines City
20 Bobby Lyons	DB	6-0	186	Fr.	Orlando
22 Tyrell Lyons	DB	6-0	219	So.	Jacksonville
20 Trey Marshall	DB	6-0	203	So.	Lake City
8 Jalen Ramsey	DB	6-1	201	Jr.	Smyrna, TN
37 Keelin Smith	DB	6-3	188	Sr.	Fort Pierce
37 Osner Valmeus	DB	5-10	156	Fr.	Ft. Lauderdale
27 Marquez White	DB	6-0	179	Jr.	Dothan, AL
Specialists	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
19 Roberto Aguayo	K	6-1	204	Jr.	Mascotte
31 Ryan Feely	K	6-0	161	Fr.	Tallahassee
38 Cason Beatty	P	6-3	215	Sr.	Charlotte, NC
96 Brian Crews	P	6-0	158	Fr.	Tallahassee
49 Jonathan Hernandez	P	6-4	218	So.	Bradenton
47 Stephen Gabbard	LS	6-3	217	So.	Tallahassee
69 Barrett Kernon	LS	6-4	256	Sr.	Ormond Beach

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	33.7	33
Rushing	138.1	95
Passing	303.3	14
Total	441.4	35

DEFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	25.6	49
Rushing	170.1	71
Passing	226.8	59
Total	396.9	61

TO MARGIN	PER GAME	RANK
- 6	- 0.43	101

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	GP	Effic	Cmp	Att	Int	Pct	Yards	TD	Long	Avg/G
J. Winston	13	145.5	305	467	18	65.3	3907	25	68	300.5
S. Maguire	4	107.7	25	49	2	51.0	339	1	74	84.8

RECEIVING

NAME	GP	No.	Yards	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
R. Greene	14	99	1365	13.8	7	74	97.5
N. O'Leary	14	48	618	12.9	6	46	44.1
J. Wilson	13	42	527	12.5	4	39	40.5

RUSHING

NAME	GP	Att.	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
D. Cook	13	170	1052	44	1008	5.9	8	44	77.5
K. Williams	12	150	718	29	689	4.6	11	28	57.4
M. Pender	9	41	222	16	206	5.0	4	56	22.9

DEF. LEADERS

Tackles: R. Northrup 122, N. Andrews 93, T. Smith 87
Tackles for loss: M. Edwards Jr. 11, J. Ramsey 9.5, E. Goldman 8
Sacks: E. Goldman 4, J. Ramsey 3, M. Edwards Jr. 3
Interceptions: N. Andrews 3, four tied with 2

247SPORTS SEMINOLES RECRUITING 2015

3 NEWCOMERS OF IMPACT

Derwin James

Five-star safety with 6-2, 210-pound size and speed. Unbelievable range and closing speed. Early enrollee that will help from day one. Ball-hawk and playmaker on the back end. The nation's No. 1 safety committed early. He should help the Seminoles early, too.

Josh Sweat

Freaky defensive end with rare size (6-5, 240) and speed (sub 4.5 40). Can help the pass-rush off the edge and give the Seminoles versatility in zone blitz packages with his rare ability to drop and cover from the defensive end position. Huge upside.

Jacques Patrick

The nation's top big back. He has the size and speed combo to be a big-time compliment to elite back Dalvin Cook. Patrick reminds some of former South Carolina Heisman Trophy winner George Rogers. The four-star recruit can hit doubles between the tackles and bounce outside for big gains.

SLEEPER

Sh'mar Kilby-Lane

A U.S. Army All-American that will do the dirty work in the run game and cover the flats. Dialed-in gym rat that helps a need area for the Seminoles in the years to come. Big, rangy outside backer with a super attitude and work ethic.

2016 NEEDS

The Seminoles will look to sign an elite quarterback, a stud tight end and load up with talent across the defensive line. They need depth and numbers at linebacker, so look for many takes there. They also need quality at cornerback and will look to sign several four-star caliber offensive linemen to reload up front.

— Ryan Bartow

247SPORTS COMPOSITE

5-star	4-star	3-star	2-star
4	10	6	0

Commitments	20
Average Stars	3.9
Total Stars	78
National Rank: 3	ACC: 1

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Abdul Bello	OT	6-6	295	✪✪✪✪	Montverde	Montverde Academy
Under Armour All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 93 prospect overall, No. 4 offensive tackle and No. 15 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite.						
Calvin Brewton	S	5-11	172	✪✪✪✪	Miami	Miami Central
Enrolled in January…U.S. Army All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 312 prospect overall, No. 17 safety and No. 46 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Honorable mention All-State Class 6A.						
George Campbell	WR	6-3	184	✪✪✪✪✪	Tarpon Springs	East Lake
Enrolled in January… Under Armour All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 19 prospect overall, No. 3 wide receiver and No. 9 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Named 2014 All-USA second team by *USA TODAY.*						
Deondre Francois	QB	6-1	195	✪✪✪✪	Bradenton	IMG Academy
Under Armour All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 65 prospect overall, No. 3 pro-style quarterback and No. 11 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Completed 79 of 149 passes for 1,294 yards and 17 touchdowns and ran for 263 yards and two scores as a senior.						
Derwin James	S	6-2	201	✪✪✪✪✪	Haines City	Haines City Senior
Enrolled in January… Under Armour All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 5 prospect overall, No. 1 safety and No. 3 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Named 2014 All-USA second team by *USA TODAY.*						
De'Andre Johnson	QB	6-0	175	✪✪✪	Jacksonville	First Coast
Enrolled in January… Under Armour All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 398 prospect overall, No. 11 dual-threat quarterback and No. 57 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Completed 211 of 326 passes for 3,705 yards and 47 touchdowns and ran for 347 yards and 10 scores as a senior.						
Sh'mar Kilby-Lane	OLB	6-1	209	✪✪✪✪	Hallandale	Hallandale
U.S. Army All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 288 prospect overall, No. 21 outside linebacker and No. 40 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Had 115 tackles, five sacks and four interceptions in 2013.						
Marcus Lewis	ATH	6-1	187	✪✪✪✪	Washington, DC	Gonzaga
Under Armour All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 139 prospect overall, No. 8 athlete and No. 2 prospect in D.C. according to the 247Sports Composite.						
Tarvarus McFadden	CB	6-2	198	✪✪✪✪✪	Fort Lauderdale	American Heritage
U.S. Army All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 15 prospect overall, No. 3 cornerback and No. 7 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite.						
Cole Minshew	OG	6-4	350	✪✪✪	Douglas, GA	Coffee
Ranked as the nation's No. 34 offensive guard and No. 50 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite.						

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Nyqwan Murray	WR	5-10	163	✪✪✪	Orlando	Oak Ridge
Ranked as the nation's No. 85 wide receiver and No. 87 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite.						
Jacques Patrick	RB	6-1	230	✪✪✪✪	Orlando	Timber Creek
Enrolled in January… Under Armour All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 39 prospect overall, No. 1 safety and No. 3 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Named 2014 All-USA second team by *USA TODAY.*						
Da'Vante Phillips	WR	6-2	204	✪✪✪✪	Miami	Miami Central
Enrolled in January…Under Armour All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 99 prospect overall, No. 3 running back and No. 10 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Had 48 receptions for 748 yards and seven touchdowns as a senior.						
Lorenzo Phillips	OLB	6-3	230	✪✪✪✪	Scooba, MS	East Mississippi C.C.
Ranked as the nation's No. 17 junior college prospect according to the 247Sports Composite.						
David Robbins	OG	6-5	305	✪✪✪	Glenelg, MD	Glenelg
Ranked as the nation's No. 37 offensive guard and No. 16 prospect in Maryland according to the 247Sports Composite… Named to the Baltimore All-Met Team in 2013 and 2014 and the prestigious *Washington Post* All-Met first team in 2014.						
Josh Sweat	WDE	6-5	240	✪✪✪✪✪	Chesapeake, VA	Oscar Smith
Enrolled in January… Under Armour All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 9 prospect overall, No. 1 weakside defensive end and No. 1 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite…Missed most of his senior season due to knee injury…Had 94 tackles, 31 tackles for loss, 22 sacks and two forced fumbles as a junior.						
Auden Tate	WR	6-4	215	✪✪✪✪	Tampa	Wharton
Ranked as the nation's No. 265 prospect overall, No. 31 wide receiver and No. 34 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Caught 49 passes for 815 yards and five touchdowns as a junior.						
Darvin Taylor	DT	6-2	295	✪✪✪✪	Chester, VA	Thomas Dale
Ranked as the nation's No. 201 prospect overall, No. 17 defensive tackle and No. 9 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite.						
A.J. Westbrook	S	6-0	173	✪✪✪	Daytona Beach	Mainland
Ranked as the nation's No. 23 safety and No. 59 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Had 84 tackles, six tackles for loss, 12 pass breakups and five interceptions in 2013.						
Jalen Wilkerson	TE	6-4	227	✪✪✪	Douglas, GA	Coffee
Ranked as the nation's No. 15 tight end and No. 43 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite.						

PLAYER PROFILE

Golson, FSU Aim for Title Game Reprise

Florida State lost a quarterback who won a national title and a Heisman Trophy. But the Seminoles gained a quarterback who helped Notre Dame get within one win of the national title in 2012.

After the loss of Jameis Winston, can Everett Golson help FSU return to the College Football Playoff?

While spring practice ended in mid-April with rising redshirt junior Sean Maguire as the clear frontrunner, Golson's transfer to FSU dramatically changed the quarterback competition.

Golson brings a wealth of experience, throwing for 5,850 yards and 41 touchdowns as a starter in 2012 and '14. He also had 581 rushing yards and 14 TD runs at Notre Dame.

Now, the final chapter of his college career takes him to FSU.

"I can't wait to get started," Golson said.

The Myrtle Beach, S.C., native helped Notre Dame to the 2012 BCS title game, a 42-14 loss to Alabama. He then was dismissed from school before the 2013 season due to academic dishonesty before re-enrolling at Notre Dame in 2014.

Golson lost his starting job to Malik Zaire before the bowl game, in part due to his high turnover total (14 interceptions and eight fumbles lost).

After each got opportunities in the spring in South Bend, Golson elected to transfer for his senior season. He visited three schools — FSU, Florida and Georgia — before graduating from Notre Dame on May 17.

After weighing his options, he chose Florida State and Fisher, the coach who has placed three quarterbacks in the first round of the NFL Draft since 2011 (Christian Ponder, EJ Manuel and Jameis Winston).

Golson will now be in the same locker room as many of the players he faced last fall. Golson threw for 313 yards, with three touchdowns and two interceptions, in a 31-27 loss at FSU in October. It was one of his best performances in an up-and-down season, one that peaked with Notre Dame at No. 5, but ended with four straight losses to close the regular season.

Photo by Rich Barnes-USA TODAY Sports

Golson arrives in Tallahassee with a chip on his shoulder, but he also has a limited amount of time to learn Fisher's complex pro-style offense and the Seminoles' thick playbook.

"We've been one of the most successful programs in the country the last few years," Fisher said. "We look forward to getting him down here to begin work on helping us continue that success."

BEST AND BRIGHTEST

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

RB DALVIN COOK

Cook became the first FSU freshman to rush for 1,000 yards in a season; he had 1,008 yards in 2014. ... Ran for 177 yards and a touchdown on 31 carries and was named MVP of ACC title game vs. Georgia Tech. ... Those 31 carries were the most by an FSU tailback in a single game since Greg Jones in 2002. ... He had five 100-yard games, including in each of his last three games.

EMERGING STAR

WR TRAVIS RUDOLPH

With the graduation of Rashad Greene, Rudolph is now expected to become FSU's No. 1 receiver. ... Had 38 catches for 555 yards and four touchdowns as a true freshman. ... Led FSU with six catches for 96 yards and an 18-yard TD against Oregon in the Rose Bowl. ... Rudolph's 68-yard touchdown catch helped FSU rally from a 21-point deficit to defeat Louisville.

TOP NEWCOMER

QB EVERETT GOLSON

Many teams are using the graduate transfer rule to help bridge quarterback gaps, and Florida State jumped into the mix by luring the immediately eligible Golson from Notre Dame. ... Led Notre Dame to a 12-0 regular season and the BCS title game as redshirt freshman in 2012. ... After his transfer to FSU, he was established as a 14-1 favorite to win the Heisman, according to an online sportsbook. ... Completed 59.5 percent of his passes at ND.

Photos courtesy of Florida State Athletics.

Fisher is willing to use Aguayo from nearly any reasonable distance.

Cason Beatty struggled with his consistency in 2014, but he averaged 41.0 yards per punt.

FSU averaged just 19.8 yards per kick return last season and made improvement in that area a priority in the spring. Look for cornerback Jalen Ramsey to join receivers such as Kermit Whitfield and Jesus Wilson as kick returners.

SCHEDULE ANALYSIS

FSU hasn't lost in the ACC since October 2012 at NC State, when the Wolfpack rallied from a 16-point second-half deficit. The Seminoles have won 24 straight against the ACC, including conference championship game victories in each of the past three years.

FSU warms up with a soft schedule, opening at home against Texas State and South Florida. The first ACC games are against two rebuilding teams, Boston College and Wake Forest.

But FSU's 2015 schedule is back-loaded with difficult games, beginning at home with Miami on Oct. 10, followed by Louisville. And the Seminoles' road slate includes dates with Georgia Tech and Clemson. The FSU-Clemson winner has won the Atlantic Division each year since 2009.

— Bob Ferrante

GEORGIA TECH YELLOW JACKETS

For more coverage of the Yellow Jackets, visit georgiatech.247Sports.com

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Paul Johnson | **DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR:** Ted Roof | **STADIUM:** Bobby Dodd Stadium: 55,000

DEFENSE COULD ANCHOR THE JACKETS IN 2015

Georgia Tech has been the most overlooked team in the ACC for the past seven years, but with Justin Thomas at the helm of Paul Johnson's spread-option offense, the Jackets could be the hunted instead of the hunter.

Johnson couldn't quite get his team over the hump while losing several close games in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013. But with Thomas at quarterback, last-minute wins and the confidence to close games changed everything.

Tech struggled out of the gate against Georgia Southern and Tulane before clicking offensively. Defensively, the Jackets struggled in losses to Duke and UNC, but overall made enough plays to win games when needed. Knocking off highly-ranked Clemson and rival Georgia in back-to-back weeks helped propel the Jackets onto the national stage.

After nearly knocking off Florida State in the ACC Championship Game, the Jackets toppled Mississippi State 49-34 in the Orange Bowl behind 452 rushing yards. The Bulldogs had been ranked No. 1 during the regular season.

The offense bailed out the defense much of last season, but Johnson thinks his defense could be a strength in 2015 with seven returning starters, plus other valued experience, on that side of the ball.

"We're going to need our defense to play much better this year because the offense is going to be younger, especially early in the year and starting out," he said.

"We're excited about what they were able to accomplish in the spring. I think we're hopeful that we're going to get back a couple of defensive linemen who did not play a year ago, and I think they're going to be a big, added help to the defense just from a depth standpoint and from play-making ability."

Johnson's offense consistently puts up 30 points per game or more in ACC play, so if the Jackets have an above-average defense, they should be in the hunt in the conference race all season, even with one of the most difficult schedules in the league.

OFFENSE

Georgia Tech's offense revolves around junior quarterback Justin Thomas and his ability to get the ball in his playmakers' hands, as well as his ability to make plays with his feet.

Aside from a clunker against Duke after injuring his ankle and trying to play through pain, Thomas put together a great first season at quarterback, notching 11 wins, which made him only the fourth quarterback in school history to hit that win total.

The Jackets led the nation in rushing with 4,789 yards on the ground, averaging 342.1 yards per game, and in third-down conversions with a 57.9-percent success rate.

Thomas threw for 1,719 yards with 18 touchdowns and just six interceptions. He ran for 1,086 yards and eight touchdowns and had a 153.9 passing efficiency ranking, which put him in the top 15 in the FBS.

Thomas may need a cheat sheet to know the names of all the new guys at the skill positions this fall. Tech lost two B-backs, three wide receivers and five A-backs who played in the two-deep last season.

The biggest question will be who replaces Synjyn Days and Zach Laskey at B-back. The dynamic duo combined for 1,775 yards rushing and 18 touchdowns on 328 carries. The projected starter at B-back, freshman C.J. Leggett, tore his ACL in the last week of spring ball and is out for the year. His backup, Quaide Weimerskirch, injured his foot a week earlier, forcing Johnson to move converted linebacker Marcus Allen from wide receiver back to B-back.

The Jackets did add Stanford graduate transfer Patrick Skov to give the offense at least one experienced player at B-back. Skov ran 12 times last season, scoring four times for the Cardinal in 2014. He will bring some much needed power to the position to complement the speed of Thomas and the A-backs.

NFL draft picks Darren Waller and DeAndre Smelter combined for 61 catches and 1,157 yards and 13 touchdowns last season. Their departures mean Micheal Summers, Ricky Jeune and Antonio Messick are the only game-experienced receivers. Three freshmen, Harland Howell, Christian Philpott and Brad Stewart, will aim to jump into the mix at receiver. Third-string quar-

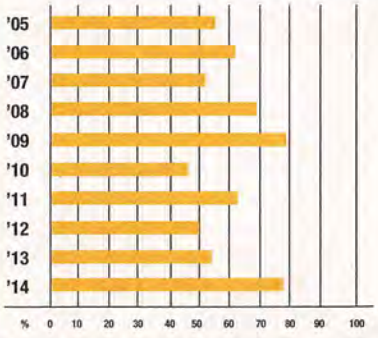
SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	'14 Record
Sept. 3	ALCORN STATE	10-3
Sept. 12	TULANE	3-9
Sept. 19	at Notre Dame	8-5
Sept. 26	at Duke	9-4
Oct. 3	NORTH CAROLINA	6-7
Oct. 10	at Clemson	10-3
Oct. 17	PITTSBURGH	6-7
Oct. 24	FLORIDA STATE	13-1
Oct. 31	at Virginia	5-7
Nov. 12	VIRGINIA TECH	7-6
Nov. 21	at Miami	6-7
Nov. 28	GEORGIA	10-3

RESULTS

	11-3, 6-2	
W	WOFFORD	38-19
W	at Tulane	38-21
W	GEORGIA SOUTHERN	42-38
W	at Virginia Tech	27-24
W	MIAMI	28-17
L	DUKE	25-31
L	at North Carolina	43-48
W	at Pittsburgh	56-28
W	VIRGINIA	35-10
W	at NC State	56-23
W	CLEMSON	28-6
W	at Georgia (OT)	30-24
	ACC Championship Game	
L	vs. Florida State	35-37
	Orange Bowl	
W	vs. Mississippi State	49-34

10-YEAR WINNING TREND



AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:
Atlanta, Ga.

2014:
11-3 overall, 6-2 ACC (1st, Coastal)

COACH:
Paul Johnson — At Georgia Tech: 59-35, 7 years; overall: 165-74, 18 years

RETURNING STARTERS:
15; 6 offense, 7 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH:
QB Justin Thomas, AB Broderick Snoddy, C Freddie Burden, NT Adam Gotsis, DT Jabari Hunt-Days, DE KeShun Freeman, LB P.J. Davis, CB D.J. White

PRIMARY STRENGTHS:
Georgia Tech has one of the best quarterbacks in the ACC with Justin Thomas running Paul Johnson's spread-option attack. Thomas can make big plays with his feet and dish the ball to his best playmakers on offense. Defensively, this has the potential to be the best overall unit in the Johnson era.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS:
Experience is lacking at a number of positions simply because these players have had to wait their turn. The Jackets finished a lowly 79th in total defense last season, despite Tech's offense finishing third in time of possession. The Jackets gave up 6.3 yards per play.

KEY LOSSES:
AB Charles Perkins, AB Tony Zenon, BB Zach Laskey, BB Synjyn Days, WR Darren Waller, WR DeAndre Smelter, OG Shaq Mason, DT Shawn Green, S Isaiah Johnson

OVERVIEW:
The Jackets should be favored to repeat as Coastal champions, but the road to the ACC championship and the CFB playoffs will be much harder. This will be the toughest schedule Johnson has had in his tenure; it includes a four-game stretch against Notre Dame, Duke, UNC and Clemson ... as well as a date with Florida State in October in Atlanta.

KEY NUMBER:
9 The Jackets will face nine bowl teams this season, including three that ended last season in the Top 15.

DB Jamal GOLDEN

Photo by Mike Jula/Fostoff Fotos

Photo by Jason Getz-USA TODAY Sports

SCOUTING REPORT: Offense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
QB	**Justin Thomas***	Jr.	Arguably fastest QB in nation; 153.9 efficiency rating.	Tim Byerly, Sr.
BB	Marcus Allen	Jr.	Moved back to B-back in spring after two years at LB.	Patrick Skov, Sr.
AB	Broderick Snoddy	Sr.	Coming off a broken leg; powerful runner ran for 10.1 YPC.	Clinton Lynch, Fr.
AB	Dennis Andrews	Jr.	Key contributor in ACC title game and Orange Bowl.	Qua Searcy, Fr.
WR	**Micheal Summers***	Jr.	Most experienced WR with 19 career starts.	Harland Howell, Fr.
WR	Ricky Jeune	So.	Physical WR with the best hands on the team.	Brandon Oliver, Sr.
LT	**Bryan Chamberlain***	Sr.	Veteran tackle who may play guard as well.	Trey Klock, Fr.
LG	**Trey Braun***	Sr.	Veteran OL can play either LG or RG as needed.	Eason Fromayan, So.
C	**Freddie Burden***	Jr.	Team's best overall linemen and key to the run game.	Andrew Marshall, So.
RG	Shamire Devine	So.	Biggest and most gifted OL struggles with weight.	Gary Brown, Fr.
RT	**Errin Joe***	Sr.	Athletic OT who was a pleasant surprise last season.	Jake Stickler, Fr.
K	**Harrison Butker***	Jr.	Set single season scoring record for a kicker last year.	Shawn Davis, Fr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

SCOUTING REPORT: Defense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
DE	Rod Rook-Chungong	Jr.	Lunch-pail kind of player with a non-stop motor.	Kenderius Whitehead, Jr.
NT	**Adam Gotsis***	Sr.	Aussie product has been Tech's best defensive tackle.	Francis Kallon, Jr.
DT	Jabari Hunt-Days	Sr.	Converted LB missed 2014 season due to academics.	Patrick Gamble, Jr.
DE	**KeShun Freeman***	So.	Led the team in sacks and TFLs as a freshman.	Antonio Simmons, So.
LB	Tyler Marcordes	Sr.	Steady LB slated for a bigger role; six starts last year.	Terrell Lewis, So.
LB	Anthony Harrell	Sr.	Downhill MLB had 19 tackles in 2014.	Beau Hankins, Jr.
LB	**P.J. Davis***	Jr.	Tackling machine with 119 stops, four sacks in '14.	Domonique Noble, Sr.
CB	**D.J. White***	Sr.	One of the top CBs in ACC; four INTs in 2014.	Step Durham, So.
CB	**Chris Milton***	Sr.	Best athlete in the secondary, had 62-yd INT for TD.	Lynn Griffin, Jr.
SS	**Demond Smith***	Sr.	Moving from nickel to SS; made 73 tackles last year.	Shaun Kagawa, So.
FS	**Jamal Golden***	Sr.	Explosive athlete and returner, had 85-yd INT for TD.	Corey Griffin, So.
P	**Ryan Rodwell***	Jr.	Fewest punts in the ACC with 32 in 2014.	Grant Aasen, Jr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

terback Matthew Jordan also is expected to work some at receiver in the fall to add depth.

Tech returns four starters on the offensive line, including standout center Freddie Burden. Burden excels at getting to the second level and clearing space for the B-backs and quarterbacks.

DEFENSE

Georgia Tech's 2014 defense was opportunistic, providing six touchdowns, 18 interceptions and 11 fumble recoveries. Statistically, the Jackets were a mixed bag, despite the Tech offense leading the nation in time of possession.

Defensive coordinator Ted Roof enters his third season with a stacked lineup that includes eight seniors and seven returning starters. Roof saw the benefit this spring of being in the third year of his system.

"The older players, when they come off on the sideline, they tell (younger players) what they did wrong, and that's the type of culture you want to continue to develop," Roof said. "That's good to see."

Tech finished in the top 50 in total defense and red zone defense, but it gave up 6.32 yards per play.

The defensive line will be improved with sophomore KeShun Freeman anchoring one end spot and three quality defensive tackles — Adam Gotsis, Jabari Hunt-Days and Patrick Gamble. Kenderius Whitehead and Antonio Simmons add some pass rushing presence off the bench.

At linebacker, P.J. Davis replaces longtime starter Quayshawn Nealy as the anchor of Tech's defense. Davis had 119 tackles, four sacks and three forced fumbles last season while flying around like a heat-seeking missile.

Nealy was the biggest playmaker at linebacker, coming up with key interceptions and fumble recoveries during his four years on the Flats. Anthony Harrell and Beau Hankins will battle for the middle linebacker slot vacated by Nealy, while Tyler Marcordes returns as the starter at strongside linebacker.

Tech has four starters back in the secondary, led by corners D.J. White and Chris Milton, who are dynamic playmakers. White is one of the most physical and dominant corners in the ACC; Milton is one of the fastest in the league. Safeties Jamal Golden and Demond Smith have tons of experience in Roof's defense to anchor those spots.

Tech spends a lot of time in the nickel defense. Lance Austin and Lynn Griffin are battling for that job that Demond Smith handled the last two years before shifting to strong safety to replace departed senior Isaiah Johnson.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Harrison Butker didn't have the most consistent season overall, but when Tech

NOTEBOOK

The addition of Stanford graduate transfer **Patrick Skov** eased some of Georgia Tech's concern at the B-back position. Skov (6-1, 235) played in 39 games for Stanford; he scored four touchdowns on his 12 carries last season.

Skov is the brother of former Cardinal All-American linebacker Shayne Skov. Both brothers are known for their toughness and physical play, so Patrick should fit right in at Tech as an option for a bruising between-the-tackles runner.

"We're excited to have Patrick come and be a part of our program," said coach **Paul Johnson**. "I really enjoyed getting to meet him when he was here for a brief time on a visit. I think he's a very mature young man, very well-spoken. He gives us a little older, more mature guy at that position."

• Johnson on the things that make quarterback **Justin Thomas** work so well in his offensive system: "I mean, he's got great quickness; he's got a strong arm. He can throw the ball. Doesn't hurt that he's pretty fast. He's just a really good athlete. I think that he's the definition of what you would call a dual-threat quarterback in that he can hurt you with his feet and his arm."

• Senior defensive tackle **Adam Gotsis** is one of the great "two-star" success stories in college football. There aren't a lot of defensive linemen who come out of Australia, so he flew under the recruiting radar, but the Tech coaches saw something they liked in Gotsis, who had played Australian Rules Football for eight years.

Now, as a senior, Gotsis is considered the sixth-best NFL prospect at defensive tackle in 2016 class, according to NFLDraftScout.com.

• B-back **Marcus Allen** led the rushing attack in the spring game with 77 yards, including a 1-yard TD run. He spent the past two seasons as a little-used linebacker at Tech before moving to offense in the spring.

"I was really proud of Marcus Allen, the way he finished up the last week of spring for us moving to that position," Johnson said. "I know he's excited to have an opportunity."

YELLOW JACKETS SPRING ROSTER

Quarterbacks	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
18 Tim Byerly	QB	6-0	212	Sr.	Alpharetta
11 Matthew Jordan	QB	6-2	200	Fr.	Jackson, AL
12 Chase Martenson	QB	6-2	201	So.	Dunwoody
5 Justin Thomas	QB	5-11	189	Jr.	Prattville, AL
Running Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
24 Marcus Allen	BB	6-2	225	Jr.	Hilliard, FL
3 Dennis Andrews	AB	6-0	194	Jr.	Tallahassee, FL
46 J.J. Green	AB	5-9	185	Jr.	Kingsland
49 Clinton Lynch	AB	6-0	181	Fr.	Norcross
29 Austin McClellan	AB	5-9	186	Jr.	Wildwood, FL
82 Qua Searcy	AB	5-11	167	Fr.	Barnesville
22 Broderick Snoddy	AB	5-9	190	Sr.	Carrollton
45 Isiah Willis	AB	5-9	193	Jr.	Marietta
Patrick Skov	BB	6-1	235	Sr.	Guadalajara, MX
39 Ryan Braswell	BB	5-11	211	So.	Atlanta
30 C.J. Leggett	BB	5-10	207	Fr.	Suwanee
4 Brady Swilling	BB	6-2	213	So.	Chatsworth
21 Quaide Weimerskirch	BB	6-0	205	Fr.	Milton, FL
Wide Receivers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
89 Bennett Barton	WR	6-1	202	So.	Roswell
88 Harland Howell	WR	6-3	200	Fr.	Marietta
81 Ricky Jeune	WR	6-3	214	So.	Spring Valley, NY
86 Antonio Messick	WR	6-3	195	So.	Fayetteville
80 Brandon Oliver	WR	5-11	208	Sr.	Douglasville
33 Jalen Saunders	WR	6-1	188	So.	Augusta
84 Micheal Summers	WR	6-1	196	Jr.	Statesboro
Offensive Linemen	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
57 Niko Anderson	OL	6-3	277	So.	Macon
78 Trey Braun	OL	6-5	294	Sr.	Tallahassee, FL
76 Nick Brigham	OL	6-3	294	Jr.	Atlanta
73 Gary Brown	OL	6-3	288	Fr.	Tampa, FL
70 Will Bryan	OL	6-4	285	Fr.	Lavonia
58 Freddie Burden	OL	6-3	302	Jr.	Statesboro
53 Bryan Chamberlain	OL	6-4	295	Sr.	Albany
71 Shamire Devine	OL	6-7	365	So.	Atlanta
79 Eason Fromayan	OL	6-4	290	So.	Alpharetta
72 Chris Griffin	OL	6-6	284	So.	Panacea, FL
62 Cheyenne Hunt	OL	6-0	245	Fr.	Springfield
75 Errin Joe	OL	6-3	313	Sr.	Lakeland, FL
65 Trey Klock	OL	6-4	273	Fr.	Hummelstown, PA
50 Andrew Marshall	OL	6-4	270	So.	Cumming
68 Michael Muns	OL	6-4	271	Jr.	Swainsboro
69 Michael Preddy	OL	6-3	274	Fr.	Charleston, SC
74 Tim Seager	OL	6-2	293	Sr.	Blacksburg, VA
59 Trey Smith	OL	6-4	255	So.	Marietta
67 Jake Stickler	OL	6-5	261	Fr.	Bradenton, FL
64 Jake Whitley	OL	6-4	288	Fr.	North Augusta, SC
66 Mitchell Williams	OL	6-2	236	So.	Alpharetta
63 Kevo Yeremian	OL	6-4	290	So.	Cumming

Defensive Linemen	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
54 Kyle Cerge-Henderson	DL	6-1	280	Fr.	Tampa, FL
91 Patrick Gamble	DL	6-5	286	Jr.	Carrollton
96 Adam Gotsis	DL	6-5	282	Sr.	Abbotsford, Australia
32 Jabari Hunt-Days	DL	6-3	261	Sr.	Marietta
92 Francis Kallon	DL	6-5	296	Jr.	Lawrenceville
93 Antonio Simmons	DL	6-3	228	So.	Jacksonville, FL
42 KeShun Freeman	DE	6-1	236	So.	LaGrange
95 Tyler Merriweather	DE	6-3	231	So.	Demopolis, AL
41 Rod Rook-Chungong	DE	6-3	243	Jr.	Silver Spring, MD
99 Tyler Stargel	DE	6-3	246	Jr.	Orange Beach, AL
90 Kenderius Whitehead	DE	6-5	209	Jr.	Milledgeville
Linebackers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
48 Chase Alford	LB	6-1	234	Jr.	Conyers
40 P.J. Davis	LB	5-11	218	Jr.	Cairo
33 Beau Hankins	LB	6-1	231	Jr.	Birmingham, AL
2 Anthony Harrell	LB	6-2	237	Sr.	Tampa, FL
25 Tre' Jackson	LB	5-10	225	Fr.	Valdosta
52 Terrell Lewis	LB	6-2	227	So.	Ocoee, FL
35 Tyler Marcordes	LB	6-4	235	Sr.	Normal, IL
23 Domonique Noble	LB	6-2	214	Sr.	Mount Ulla, NC
63 Rusty Scott	LB	6-3	211	Sr.	Lincolnton
Defensive Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
26 Zach Allen	DB	5-9	179	Jr.	Roswell
17 Lance Austin	DB	5-10	187	So.	Barnesville
20 Lawrence Austin	DB	5-9	184	So.	Barnesville
22 Melvin Davis	DB	6-0	194	So.	Madison
8 Step Durham	DB	5-11	188	So.	Jacksonville, FL
4 Jamal Golden	DB	6-0	193	Sr.	Wetumpka, AL
14 Corey Griffin	DB	6-2	194	So.	Tyrone
27 Lynn Griffin	DB	6-0	199	Jr.	Jacksonville, FL
44 Shaun Kagawa	DB	5-11	202	So.	Hilo, HI
13 John Marvin	DB	6-1	193	So.	Ft. Walton Beach, FL
18 Zach Matthews	DB	6-2	180	So.	Suwanee
6 Chris Milton	DB	5-11	190	Sr.	Folkston
16 Denis Onwuala	DB	5-8	180	Jr.	Alpharetta
45 Josh Selembo	DB	6-3	179	So.	Roswell
12 Demond Smith	DB	6-0	191	Sr.	Monroe
36 Tyler Teknipp	DB	5-10	190	Jr.	McDonough
25 Roderick Tyler	DB	5-8	207	So.	Atlanta
28 D.J. White	DB	5-11	188	Sr.	McDonough
47 Jalen Johnson	S	6-3	200	Fr.	Oneonta, AL
Specialists	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
87 Harrison Butker	K	6-3	202	Jr.	Decatur
98 Roberto Hinojosa	K	5-10	179	Sr.	Suwanee
82 Grant Aasen	P	6-2	190	Fr.	Fayetteville
89 Alec D'Urbano	P	6-3	190	Fr.	Milledgeville
85 Ryan Rodwell	P	6-2	188	Jr.	Deland, FL
56 Trevor Stroebel	LS	6-4	218	Jr.	Saukville, WI
55 Sean Tobin	LS	6-3	219	Sr.	Holmdel, NJ
61 Casey Wilson	LS	6-2	202	So.	Tucker

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	37.9	11
Rushing	342.1	1
Passing	134.4	121
Total	476.5	19

DEFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	25.7	52
Rushing	167.6	62
Passing	243.7	87
Total	411.3	79

TO MARGIN	PER GAME	RANK
+11	+0.79	14

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	GP	Effic	Cmp	Att	Int	Pct	Yards	TD	Long	Avg/G
J. Thomas	14	153.9	96	187	6	51.3	1719	18	79	122.8
T. Byerly	6	190.2	9	13	0	69.2	148	1	30	24.7

RECEIVING

NAME	GP	No.	Yards	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
D. Smelter	12	35	715	20.4	7	71	59.6
D. Waller	12	26	442	17.0	6	55	36.8
D. Hill	14	10	178	17.8	1	47	12.7

RUSHING

NAME	GP	Att.	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
J. Thomas	14	190	1248	162	1086	5.7	8	65	77.6
S. Days	14	157	926	2	924	5.9	9	69	66.0
Z. Laskey	11	171	853	2	851	5.0	9	26	77.4

DEF. LEADERS

Tackles: P.J. Davis 119, Q. Nealy 92, D. Smith 73
Tackles for loss: K. Freeman 9.5, P.J. Davis 8.5, A. Gotsis 6.5
Sacks: K. Freeman 4.5, P.J. Davis 4, A. Gotsis 3
Interceptions: D.J. White 4, J. Golden 4, Q. Nealy 2, C. Milton 2

247SPORTS YELLOW JACKETS RECRUITING 2015

3 NEWCOMERS OF IMPACT

Will Bryan
An in-state guard that moves and has growth potential. The ideal evaluation fit that the Yellow Jackets seek for their interior linemen given their option scheme.

Kyle Henderson
A legacy signee out of national power Tampa (Fla.) Plant. Henderson has the goods to potentially be a multiple-year starter. He plays with a strong low base and has a frame to only add strength and weight.

Anree Saint-Amour
An edge rusher with the versatility to play multiple spots. Out of powerhouse program Suwanee (Ga.) North Gwinnett, the three-star recruit has a frame on which to build and moves well.

SLEEPER

Meiko Dotson
A cover man that the schools in Florida overlooked. From a strong program (Daytona Beach, Fla./Mainland), Dotson can fly and compete.

2016 NEEDS

As always, it starts at home for Georgia Tech. They can get almost everything they need inside their own borders. Georgia is the fourth-best state in the country for producing D-I talent. The Yellow Jackets will try to fill up on linemen; a dual-threat quarterback and the rest of the class being skill, with almost all of it coming from Georgia.

— Ryan Bartow

247SPORTS COMPOSITE

0	0	27	0
✪✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪	✪✪

Commitments	27
Average Stars	3.0
Total Stars	81
National Rank: 44	ACC: 8

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Victor Alexander	ILB	5-10	221	✪✪✪	Jacksonville, FL	Trinity Christian Academy
Ranked as the nation's No. 18 inside linebacker and No. 74 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Named first-team All-First Coast and first-team Class 3A All-State ... 2014 All-First Coast Defensive Player of the Year.						
KirVonte Benson	RB	5-8	190	✪✪✪	Marietta	Marietta
Ranked as the nation's No. 141 running back and No. 178 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Finished high school career with 3,587 rushing yards and 36 touchdowns ... Added 682 receiving yards and four touchdowns.						
Will Bryan	OG	6-3	270	✪✪✪	Carnesville	Franklin County
Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 39 offensive guard and No. 67 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Threw shot put on track team ... Football team captain as senior.						
Christian Campbell	ATH	6-1	185	✪✪✪	Ponchatoula, LA	Ponchatoula
Ranked as the nation's No. 40 athlete and No. 28 prospect in Louisiana according to the 247Sports Composite… Rushed for more than 2,700 yards and 30 total touchdowns in final two seasons… Named to Louisiana Class 5A All-State team.						
Tyler Cooksey	ILB	6-3	220	✪✪✪	Norcross	Greater Atlanta Christian School
Ranked as the nation's No. 21 inside linebacker and No. 64 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 91 tackles, six sacks, 12 tackles for loss and returned interception for touchdown as senior.						
Nathan Cottrell	RB	5-10	185	✪✪✪	Knoxville, TN	Knoxville West
Ranked as the nation's No. 118 running back and No. 32 prospect in Tennessee according to the 247Sports Composite… Was all-district, all-region and all-state running back as junior and senior ... Finished career with school-record 3,974 rushing yards and 48 touchdowns.						
David Curry	S	6-1	190	✪✪✪	Buford	Buford
Ranked as the nation's No. 91 safety and No. 128 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Team captain as a senior while helping Buford to three straight state titles and a 58-2 record in four years.						
Meiko Dotson	CB	5-10	175	✪✪✪	Daytona Beach, FL	Mainland
Ranked as the nation's No. 164 cornerback and No. 274 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… First-team All-Central Florida performer as junior and senior ... Finished career with 12 interceptions and 25 pass break-ups in three years as starter.						
Brentavious Glanton	DT	6-2	275	✪✪✪	Albany	Monroe
Ranked as the nation's No. 66 defensive tackle and No. 105 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded 77 tackles, six sacks, 17 tackles for loss and 41 hurries as senior ... Named first-team All-Area and first-team All-Region.						
A.J. Gray	S	6-1	196	✪✪✪	Sandersville	Washington County
Ranked as the nation's No. 36 safety and No. 54 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 10 interceptions, returning four for touchdowns as a senior ... Responsible for 64 touchdowns during senior season.						
Kyle Henderson	DT	6-2	280	✪✪✪	Tampa, FL	Plant
Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 69 defensive tackle and No. 153 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Was a two-time captain of football team and was also captain of track team.						
Harland Howell	WR	6-3	200	✪✪✪	Marietta	Wheeler
Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 116 wide receiver and No. 95 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Named first-team all-region in 2013 and 2014 ... All-Cobb County selection in 2013 and 2014.						
Omahri Jarrett	APB	5-9	168	✪✪✪	Douglasville	New Manchester
Ranked as the nation's No. 26 all-purpose back and No. 145 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Rushed for 525 yards with three touchdowns as senior.						
Mikell Lands-Davis	RB	5-11	205	✪✪✪	Douglasville	Alexander
Ranked as the nation's No. 48 running back and No. 62 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Rushed for Douglas County-record 2,374 yards and 28 touchdowns as junior.						

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
TaQuon Marshall	APB	5-10	165	✪✪✪	Hamilton	Harris County
Ranked as the nation's No. 19 all-purpose back and No. 93 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Passed for 1,376 yards and 18 touchdowns and rushed for 1,436 yards and 12 touchdowns as senior ... First-team Class 5A All-State.						
Marcus Marshall	RB	5-9	200	✪✪✪	Raleigh, NC	Millbrook
Ranked as the nation's No. 78 running back and No. 35 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Younger brother of Georgia running back Keith Marshall ... Set school's season rushing record with 2,198 yards and 31 touchdowns.						
Brant Mitchell	ILB	6-2	240	✪✪✪	Knoxville, TN	Webb School of Knoxville
Ranked as the nation's No. 31 inside linebacker and No. 24 prospect in Tennessee according to the 247Sports Composite… Two-time Tennessee Mr. Football in Division II-A in 2013 and 2014 ... Helped Webb School to three state championships.						
Scott Morgan	DT	6-5	275	✪✪✪	Woodstock	Etowah
Ranked as the nation's No. 84 defensive tackle and No. 136 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Named 2014 Defensive Player of the Year... First-team All-Region 5-6A.						
Brad Morgan	OG	6-5	266	✪✪✪	Woodstock	Etowah
Ranked as the nation's No. 101 offensive guard and No. 180 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Named first-team Georgia Class 6A All-State by *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* and Georgia Sports Writers Association.						
Christian Philpott	WR	6-3	203	✪✪✪	Tallahassee, FL	North Florida Christian
Ranked as the nation's No. 57 wide receiver and No. 67 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 2A Player of the Year... Caught 44 passes for 902 yards and 10 touchdowns as senior.						
Jaylend Ratliffe	ATH	6-1	195	✪✪✪	Laurinburg, NC	Scotland County
Ranked as the nation's No. 52 athlete and No. 21 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Completed 56 percent of passes for 1,756 yards with 16 touchdowns and only two interceptions and rushed for 2,053 yards and 36 touchdowns as a junior.						
Anree Saint-Amour	WDE	6-3	225	✪✪✪	Suwanee	North Gwinnett
Ranked as the nation's No. 24 weakside defensive end and No. 49 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 59 tackles, including 24 tackles for loss, 15 hurries, three sacks and four forced fumbles as senior.						
Trent Sellers	WDE	6-3	230	✪✪✪	Tyrone	Sandy Creek
Ranked as the nation's No. 67 weakside defensive end and No. 160 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Defensive captain ... First-team all-region and honorable mention all-state as senior.						
Brad Stewart	WR	6-2	180	✪✪✪	Savannah	Benedictine Military School
Ranked as the nation's No. 102 wide receiver and No. 102 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Was three-sport standout at Benedictine Military School ... Was team captain as senior.						
Dorian Walker	ATH	6-0	175	✪✪✪	Kennesaw	Mount Paran Christian School
Ranked as the nation's No. 73 athlete and No. 89 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 *Marietta Daily Journal* Offensive Player of the Year ... First-team all-state and all-county as senior.						
Quaide Weimerskirch	RB	6-0	201	✪✪✪	Milton, FL	Pace
Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 138 running back and No. 242 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Rushed for 1,792 yards and 23 TDs as senior ... Owns Pace's career rushing record (4,865) and career rushing TDs (59).						
Dante Wigley	CB	6-1	183	✪✪✪	Carrollton	Carrollton
Ranked as the nation's No. 82 cornerback and No. 90 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… First-team all-region and all-area in 2013 and 2014 ... Recorded 65 tackles, eight pass breakups, two forced fumbles and two interceptions as senior.						

PLAYER PROFILE

Thomas Ready to Rebuild With New Cast

For a first-time starter, Justin Thomas put together one of the greatest seasons of any quarterback in Georgia Tech history. But he will have a whole new cast of characters around him this season.

Leadership is a major focus for Thomas. He says the Orange Bowl win and a trip to the ACC Championship Game are behind him, and he's ready for the next chapter with his 2015 squad.

"We can't do anything about last season and we need to focus on this year and build a new personality for this team," Thomas said after the spring game. "Right now I'm working with the guys who don't have game reps or little game reps and my focus is on getting comfortable with them and getting them on the same page."

The focus of the offense and the new weapons at Thomas' disposal will be the biggest question facing the Yellow Jackets, and Thomas says he wants to do everything he can do develop his running backs and receivers.

"We have to figure out some of the strengths and weakness of the team and, once we do, we can all get on the same page," Thomas said. "I think we had slow starts the whole spring and we started off fast in the spring game and that is good for us and what we need to do."

Thomas' command of the offense impressed coach Paul Johnson enough to let him take limited reps in spring practice.

"I think he had a good spring," Johnson said. "I think he's getting better overall knowledge of what we're trying to accomplish and what we're trying to do. He's got a great skill-set for what we want to do.

"He's a good competitor, and I look for him to have a great junior season."

After spending a year as a backup in 2013,

Photo by Mike Jula/Fostof Fotos

Thomas threw for 1,719 yards with 18 touchdowns and just six interceptions, while also racking up 1,086 yards on the ground last year.

Johnson says he expects even more from his quarterback entering his junior season, with all five other starting skill position players gone.

"I think that he's more comfortable with what we're asking him to do and understands it better, and he's going to be one of the more experienced guys over there, so he's going to have to be a leader," Johnson said. "He lost a lot of good senior skill guys around him."

BEST AND BRIGHTEST

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

QB JUSTIN THOMAS

Thomas is the best player on the team, and he makes the whole offense run with his ability to read the defense in the option and passing games. ... Thomas' best performance came on the biggest stage in the Orange Bowl, when he shook Mississippi State's Will Redmond out of his cleats. ... In the spring, Thomas signed autographs and posed with pictures for every visitor to Tech practice as part of his rising star status among the Tech faithful.

EMERGING STAR

DT JABARI HUNT-DAYS

Two seasons at MLB for Jabari Hunt-Days ended last spring when he moved to defensive line. ... After some academic trouble sidelined him for his redshirt junior campaign, Hunt-Days is back for one last shot at glory and he took no prisoners in spring ball. ... Up to nearly 300 pounds from 245 two years ago ... Now-departed OL Shaq Mason credits Hunt-Days' scout team work for helping him develop into an All-American last season.

TOP NEWCOMER

AB QUA SEARCY

In his redshirt year, Qua Searcy played three different positions for the Jackets and nearly saw game action at corner. ... This fall, he will be at A-back, where he impressed in the spring game with his speed, quickness and toughness. ... Searcy was lauded by Paul Johnson for his strong spring performance, and he should help anchor his position for the next three or four seasons.

Photos courtesy of Georgia Tech Athletics.

needed key kicks, he came through. Butker's 53-yard field goal to send the UGA game to overtime is one of the biggest field goals in Tech's recent history.

From 30 to 39 yards is where Butker struggled the most, hitting just 2 of 7 attempts. Butker drilled 52 of his 87 kickoffs into the end zone for touchbacks.

Punter Ryan Rodwell doesn't get a lot of work, punting only 32 times for a 40.2-yard average.

Jamal Golden has been one of the top return men in the nation, but he struggled to get opportunities in 2014 as a punt returner, and his kickoff return stats were subpar by his high standards.

SCHEDULE ANALYSIS

After opening with Alcorn State and Tulane at home, the Jackets begin a gauntlet with trips to Notre Dame and Duke in back-to-back weeks, followed by UNC at home and a trip to Clemson. That will be one of the toughest four-game stretches the Jackets have faced in recent years.

The back half of the schedule is no better, with Florida State, Virginia Tech, a trip to Miami and Georgia in four of the final five games. This is the hardest schedule for Georgia Tech since the 1990s.

— Kelly Quinlan

LOUISVILLE CARDINALS

For more coverage of the Cardinals, visit louisville.247Sports.com

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Garrick McGee **DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR:** Todd Grantham **STADIUM:** Papa John's Cardinal Stadium: 55,000

TESTS AWAIT IN SECOND YEAR OF SECOND PETRINO ERA

Louisville enters the 2015 season with reasonably high expectations in the second year of Bobby Petrino's second coaching stint at Louisville.

The Cardinals understand full well the challenges of playing in the same league as Clemson, Florida State and resurgent Georgia Tech, which reached the ACC title game last season. The Cardinals have some questions on offense, but they have a stout defense that should be ready to roll right away.

More good news? Continuity.

Both coordinators — offensive coordinator Garrick McGee and defensive coordinator Todd Grantham — spurned offers elsewhere to stay on Petrino's staff and continue building what they hope is a potential College Football Playoff program in the coming years.

"I liked having the continuity on our staff and having all of our coaches back," Petrino said.

"Our players really understand how we're going to work and go about our business and the tempo we're going to practice at, so I felt like we were able to make some real strides there."

This season, that coaching familiarity will help in a few ways.

First, McGee, who also serves as the quarterbacks coach, is still around to tutor sophomore Reggie Bonnafon, who was pressed into starting duty as a freshman after starter Will Gardner went down with two knee injuries.

Bonnafon made significant strides last fall, but the most noticeable progress came this spring, with McGee right alongside him throughout the team workouts.

But McGee's impact doesn't stop there. Louisville lost three key cogs along the offensive line. With thin ranks, McGee and Petrino will have to get creative with scheming and play-calling to make up for a lack of bodies — and talent — in the trenches.

In the meantime, Grantham's return keeps the momentum rolling from a fabulous first season at U of L. His defense ranked in the top 10 in the nation in rushing and total defense and tied for first in interceptions.

Like it did last year, the defense likely will have to carry the load early in the season as a new receiving corps and that patchwork offensive line catch up.

"We're going to be strong on the defensive front," Petrino said. "We'll have some new guys in the secondary, but they're talented. We have a really good linebacking crew, too."

OFFENSE

There are enough talented players on Louisville's offense to make big plays, but the question will continue to be if the Cards' line holds up.

The running backs and receivers yet again make up some of Louisville's best position groups.

Running back Brandon Radcliff became a key figure last fall, running for a team-best 737 yards and 12 touchdowns while surpassing Michael Dyer and Dominique Brown on the depth chart. Behind him, burly fullback/tailback combo L.J. Scott showed signs of his talent as a downhill runner, and junior college transfer Jeremy Smith is a bruising back who can immediately help.

Replacing DeVante Parker won't be easy, but the receiving corps took an even bigger hit with its depth. Gone are Kai De La Cruz, Eli Rogers, Michaelee Harris and Matt Milton. In their place, Louisville needs a collective effort.

Ja'Quay Savage, Jamari Staples and Alphonso Carter are tall, physical receivers who can make plays down field. Javonte Bagley, a sophomore, had an impressive freshman camp last fall but couldn't break into the rotation. He'll help the depth this year, as will redshirt sophomore Dontez Byrd.

Savage (formerly Williams) is a transfer from Texas A&M who sat out last season. Staples comes as an immediately-eligible transfer from UAB, which disbanded its program after last season.

There's still more potential help from a newcomer: Early enrollee Traveon Samuel, a freshman, is a jitterbug speedster who can handle the slot alongside junior James Quick.

"We do think Traveon Samuel will really help us," Petrino said. "He's a guy who can really run with the ball after the catch and is very quick and has good hands and can make

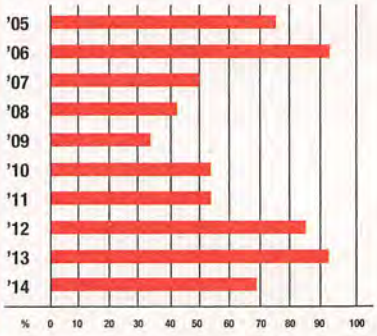
SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	'14 Record
Sept. 5	vs. Auburn (Atlanta, GA)	8-5
Sept. 12	HOUSTON	8-5
Sept. 17	CLEMSON	10-3
Sept. 26	SAMFORD	7-4
Oct. 3	at NC State	8-5
Oct. 17	at Florida State	13-1
Oct. 24	BOSTON COLLEGE	7-6
Oct. 30	at Wake Forest	3-9
Nov. 7	SYRACUSE	3-9
Nov. 14	VIRGINIA	5-7
Nov. 21	at Pittsburgh	6-7
Nov. 28	at Kentucky	5-7

RESULTS

9-4, 5-3		
W	MIAMI	31-13
W	MURRAY STATE	66-21
L	at Virginia	21-23
W	at FIU	34-3
W	WAKE FOREST	20-10
W	at Syracuse	28-6
L	at Clemson	17-23
W	NC STATE	30-18
L	FLORIDA STATE	31-42
W	at Boston College	38-19
W	at Notre Dame	31-28
W	KENTUCKY	44-40
	Belk Bowl	
L	vs. Georgia	14-37

10-YEAR WINNING TREND



AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:
Louisville, Ky.

2014:
9-4 overall, 5-3 ACC (3rd, Atlantic)

COACH:
Bobby Petrino — At Louisville: 50-13, 5 years; overall: 92-34, 11 years

RETURNING STARTERS:
8; 3 offense, 4 defense, kicker

PLAYERS TO WATCH:
QB Reggie Bonnafon, RB Brandon Radcliff, WR James Quick, DE Sheldon Rankins, LB James Burgess, LB Keith Kelsey, LB/DE Devonte Fields, S Josh Harvey-Clemons

PRIMARY STRENGTHS:
Louisville has the makings of a physical defensive front a season after the Cardinals ranked 10th in the nation in rushing defense. Bonnafon, who looked more comfortable this spring, is the kind of dual-threat quarterback that allows Petrino to use the read option and other designed QB runs to keep defenses off balance.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS:
The most glaring issue for Louisville, for the second-consecutive season, is its offensive line. Versatile junior college transfer Khalil Hunter should plug in somewhere, but the Cards only have one truly reliable offensive lineman and don't have a ton of depth.

KEY LOSSES:
WR DeVante Parker, OT Jamon Brown, OG John Miller, OG Jake Smith, LB Lorenzo Mauldin, CB Charles Gaines, S Gerod Holliman, S James Sample

OVERVIEW:
The second year of the new Petrino era will put the coach's abilities to the test. He'll have a shaky offensive line and a mostly new group of receivers around, presumably, Bonnafon. The defense should be strong again, but how the Cards handle their rough slate of September games (Auburn, Clemson and Houston) could determine the fate of their season. Anything less than 8-4 would be disappointing.

KEY NUMBER:
14 Number of interceptions last season by Gerod Holliman, who tied a national record. U of L will need a collective turnover-creating effort to replicate what Holliman did in 2014.

DE Sheldon RANKINS

Photo by Jamie Rhodes-USA TODAY Sports

LB

JAMES BURGESS

Photo by Brian Tirpak

SCOUTING REPORT: Offense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
QB	Reggie Bonnafon	So.	Started 5 games; working on accuracy, decision-making.	Kyle Bolin, So.
RB	Brandon Radcliff	Jr.	5-9 bowling ball once broke 27 tackles in a game at Syracuse.	L.J. Scott, So.
SL	**James Quick***	Jr.	Is this the year Louisville native finally puts it all together?	Traveon Samuel, Fr.
WR	Ja'Quay Savage	Sr.	Texas A&M transfer changed last name (Williams) and scenery.	Alphonso Carter, So.
WR	Jamari Staples	Jr.	UAB transfer is long and athletic; fit right in during the spring.	Javonte Bagley, So.
TE	Keith Towbridge	Jr.	Lots of depth at TE; Towbridge has size to help on third down.	Micky Crum, So.
LT	**Aaron Epps***	Sr.	Epps is a steady pass blocker and a vocal leader.	Lukayus McNeil, So.
LG	Pedro Sibiea	Jr.	Former DL moved to O-line last year, but didn't win job.	Danny Burns, So.
C	**Tobijah Hughley***	Jr.	Former walk-on won starting spot and scholarship in 2014.	T.C. Klusman, Jr.
RG	Khalil Hunter	Jr.	JC transfer can also play center, but probably fits best at OG.	Skylar Lacy, So.
RT	Kelby Johnson	Sr.	Has length and talent as he moves into starting role.	Lukayus McNeil, So.
PK	**John Wallace***	Sr.	A reliable leg who hit a few important kicks last season.	Josh Appleby, Sr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

SCOUTING REPORT: Defense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
DE	**Sheldon Rankins***	Sr.	Massive DE with unexpected quickness; big-time pass rusher.	Trevon Young, Sr.
NT	DeAngelo Brown	Jr.	Physical, determined brute is looking for better health.	Kyle Shortridge, So.
DE	**Pio Vatuvei***	Sr.	JC transfer last fall made big impact as a valuable reserve.	Johnny Richardson, So.
LB	Devonte Fields	Jr.	Former TCU standout oozes talent; dangerous off the edge.	Stacy Thomas, So.
LB	**James Burgess***	Sr.	Consistent tackler; has knack for being in right place.	Keith Brown, Jr.
LB	**Keith Kelsey***	Jr.	Sideline-to-sideline tackling ability and good cover skills.	Nick Dawson-Brents, Jr.
CB	Trumaine Washington	So.	Made several nice run stops and pass breakups last fall.	De'Eric Culver, So.
CB	Shaq Wiggins	Jr.	UGA transfer is talented and quick on the outside.	Zykiesis Cannon, So.
NB	Jermaine Reve	Sr.	High-IQ guy, but health issues keep coming up.	Jaire Alexander, Fr.
S	Josh Harvey-Clemons	Jr.	Former elite recruit gets a chance to be a star at U of L.	Terrence Ross, So.
S	Chucky Williams	So.	Impressive two springs ago, Williams gets shot as starter.	Jarrod Barnes, Jr.
P	Josh Appleby	Sr.	Pressed into spot duty at times last fall.	TBD

***Returning Starter in Bold**

different catches."

Of course, the spotlight is always on quarterback, and an improved Reggie Bonnafon should be the guy there. If he struggles, though, McGee and Petrino have a bevy of options.

Will Gardner, who began last season as the starter, returns from knee surgery this summer. He was scheduled to begin a throwing program this summer in advance of fall camp.

Redshirt sophomore Kyle Bolin, once considered the best quarterback in the state as a high school prospect, filled in admirably late last season when Bonnafon was hurt. And Penn State transfer Tyler Ferguson and incoming freshman Lamar Jackson just add to the talented mix.

Can anyone protect them? Senior left tackle Aaron Epps is the only consistent returning linemen from last season.

DEFENSE

For a team that was supposed to be all about offense last season — the first under Petrino, considered one of the top offensive minds in the nation — Louisville was built on defense.

For the first half of the season, U of L's swarming pass rush and interception-hungry secondary helped the Cards rank among the best in the nation in many of the top statistical categories.

They technically scheme as a 3-4, but coordinator Todd Grantham mixed and matched his personnel last season and often morphed his group in a 3-3-5 nickel package, using his third linebacker, Lorenzo Mauldin, as a blitzer.

Mauldin, a fourth-round draft pick in May, is gone, replaced by former TCU standout Devonte Fields — the 2012 AP Big 12 Defensive Player of the Year as a freshman, when he has 18.5 tackles for loss, including 10 sacks — and tenacious redshirt sophomore Stacy Thomas. Fields spent last season in junior college after being "separated" from TCU after an alleged domestic violence incident.

But for Louisville's defense to start as well as it did last fall, the Cardinals need several guys to play big roles. Defensive end Sheldon Rankins was a bully as an interior pass rusher last season (13.5 tackles for loss), and surpassed Mauldin in sacks (eight) late in the season.

Linebackers James Burgess and Keith Kelsey — versatile, strong players whom Grantham calls the brains of the operation — are vital to directing traffic.

And safeties Chucky Williams and Josh Harvey-Clemons, a former Georgia standout, need to find a way to fill the interception and big-hit voids left by Gerod Holliman (14 picks last fall) and James Sample.

On the outside, young cornerbacks Trumaine Washington, Shaq Wiggins, Jaire Alexander, De'Eric Culver and Zykiesis Cannon have the talent to handle one-on-one situations. Former receiver Cornelius Sturghill switched positions this offseason and has shown he can be one of the team's top corners.

NOTEBOOK

Louisville produced a school-record 10 NFL draft picks this year, including four who went in the first three rounds.

"It's a testament to the hard work these guys put in during their time at Louisville," said coach **Bobby Petrino.**

Wide receiver **DeVante Parker** led the Cardinals' NFL bounty, selected No. 14 overall by the Miami Dolphins. With his size, speed and hands — and opportunity in Miami, which parted ways with WR Mike Wallace — Parker has a great chance to be one of the biggest-impact rookies in the league this season.

He signed a reported four-year deal for $10.9 million, with a signing bonus of $6.2 million.

• Other Louisville draft picks were: OT **Jamon Brown** (third round, No. 72 overall), OL **John Miller** (third, No. 81), OLB **Lorenzo Mauldin** (third, No. 82), SS **James Sample** (fourth, No. 104), LB **Deiontrez Mount** (sixth, No. 177), CB **Charles Gaines** (sixth, No. 189), DE **B.J. Dubose** (sixth, 193), FS **Gerod Holliman** (seventh, No. 239) and TE **Gerald Christian** (seventh, 256).

Note that Christian was the last pick in the draft — "Mr. Irrelevant" — although he seemingly landed in a good spot with the Arizona Cardinals, who lost tight end John Carlson to retirement.

• Who will be Louisville's top draft prospects in 2016? It could very well be DE **Devonte Fields**, who is something of an X-factor as he returns to major college football. Senior **Josh Harvey-Clemons** entered the summer as the No. 7 strong safety prospect in the 2016 class, according to NFLDraftScout.com.

• The Cardinals added two early-enrolled freshmen — receiver **Traveon Samuel** and defensive back **Jaire Alexander**, each of whom should at least be rotational players as rookies.

"Both of them are going to be outstanding football players for us," Petrino said. "They're still young, and they're still learning, but they're very talented and really motivated. I like their commitment and motivation and how much they add to our campus and our football team."

• Louisville picked up a big commitment in late May from **Tylin Oden**, rated as the 15th-best pro-style quarterback in the country, according to 247Sports. Oden, from Columbia, Tenn., had offers from Tennessee, Mississippi State, West Virginia and others.

CARDINALS SPRING ROSTER

Quarterbacks	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
14 Kyle Bolin	QB	6-2	208	So.	Lexington
7 Reggie Bonnafon	QB	6-3	209	So.	Louisville
5 Tyler Ferguson	QB	6-4	217	Jr.	Bakersfield, CA
11 Will Gardner	QB	6-5	220	Jr.	Douglas, GA
3 Pat Thomas	QB	6-4	190	Jr.	Atlanta, GA
Running Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
33 Malin Jones	RB	6-0	225	Jr.	Naperville
4 Corvin Lamb	RB	5-9	208	Sr.	Miami, FL
23 Brandon Radcliff	RB	5-9	214	Jr.	Miami, FL
27 L.J. Scott	RB	6-0	226	So.	Marion, OH
31 Darius Skinner	RB	5-7	190	Sr.	Winchester
34 Jeremy Smith	RB	6-2	223	So.	Hammond, CA
39 Griffin Uhl	FB	6-2	264	Jr.	Henryville, IN
Wide Receivers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
88 Javonte Bagley	WR	6-3	192	So.	Vero Beach, FL
82 Dontez Byrd	WR	5-11	170	So.	Louisville
1 Alphonso Carter	WR	6-3	203	So.	Fort Washington, MD
30 Tae'Shawn Gibbs	WR	5-10	181	So.	Louisville
38 Chris Miele	WR	6-2	190	So.	Louisville
84 Gio Pascascio	WR	6-3	185	Jr.	Glendale, AZ
17 James Quick	WR	6-1	191	Jr.	Louisville
15 Traveon Samuel	WR	5-7	178	Fr.	Phenix City, AL
2 Jamari Staples	WR	6-4	196	Jr.	Lineville, AL
85 Cody Swabek	WR	6-1	168	Fr.	Louisville
19 Ja'Quay Savage	WR	6-3	214	Jr.	Tyrone, GA
Tight Ends	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
83 Micky Crum	TE	6-4	257	Fr.	Columbus, OH
18 Cole Hikutini	TE	6-5	242	Jr.	San Francisco, CA
80 Charles Standberry	TE	6-3	226	So.	Montgomery, AL
89 Keith Towbridge	TE	6-5	261	Jr.	Toledo, OH
Offensive Linemen	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
64 Gabe Ahner	OL	6-3	289	Jr.	Okinawa, Japan
68 Danny Burns	OL	6-6	303	Fr.	Hamilton, OH
61 Tobijah Hughley	OL	6-3	289	Jr.	Lexington
50 Khalil Hunter	OL	6-4	291	Jr.	Orlando, FL
76 Kelby Johnson	OL	6-7	297	Sr.	Bowie, MD
62 T.C. Klusman	OL	6-3	275	Jr.	Cincinnati, OH
75 Skylar Lacy	OL	6-6	306	So.	Indianapolis, IN
72 Lukayus McNeil	OL	6-6	313	Fr.	Indianapolis, IN
73 Pedro Sibiea	OL	6-3	300	Jr.	Homestead, FL
78 Aaron Epps	OT	6-7	288	Sr.	Tucker, GA

Defensive Linemen	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
14 Drew Bailey	DL	6-5	284	So.	Atlanta, GA
56 Spencer Foy	DL	6-4	214	So.	Louisville
93 Tae Thibodeaux	DL	6-2	280	Fr.	New Iberia, LA
59 Aaron Ahner	DT	6-3	259	Sr.	Okinawa, Japan
97 DeAngelo Brown	DT	6-1	308	Sr.	Savannah, GA
57 Finesse Middleton	DT	5-11	242	So.	Gadsden, AL
95 Kyle Shortridge	DT	6-2	305	So.	Loxahatchee, FL
98 Sheldon Rankins	DE	6-2	303	Sr.	Covington, GA
90 Johnny Richardson	DE	6-3	322	So.	Jacksonville, FL
44 Pio Vatuvei	DE	6-2	296	Sr.	Patterson, CA
Linebackers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
46 Lamar Atkins	LB	5-11	236	Jr.	Miami, FL
1 Keith Brown	LB	6-1	237	Jr.	Miami, FL
13 James Burgess	LB	6-0	229	Sr.	Homestead, FL
52 Nick Dawson-Brents	LB	6-3	265	Jr.	Charlotte, NC
51 Royce Donovan	LB	6-2	224	Jr.	Louisville
99 James Hearns	LB	6-3	257	So.	Tallahassee, FL
55 Keith Kelsey	LB	6-1	236	Jr.	Gainesville, FL
49 Blake Ramsey	LB	5-11	208	Jr.	Louisville
42 Isaac Stewart	LB	6-2	236	Fr.	Charlotte, NC
32 Stacy Thomas	LB	6-1	225	So.	Miami, FL
91 Trevon Young	LB	6-4	229	Sr.	Council Bluffs, IA
96 Henry Famurewa	OLB	6-2	245	So.	Powder Springs, GA
Defensive Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
10 Jaire Alexander	CB	5-11	184	Fr.	Charlotte, NC
30 Richard Benjamin	CB	6-0	211	So.	Tampa, FL
24 Zykiesis Cannon	CB	6-0	195	So.	Mauldin, SC
34 George Clements	CB	6-0	184	Jr.	Willow Spring, NC
26 De'Eric Culver	CB	6-0	186	So.	Tallahassee, FL
21 Devontre Parnell	CB	5-11	184	Jr.	Winnsboro, SC
3 Cornelius Sturghill	CB	5-11	186	Fr.	Memphis, TN
29 Trumaine Washington	CB	5-10	183	So.	Miami, FL
6 Shaq Wiggins	CB	5-10	171	Jr.	Tyrone, GA
41 Jarrod Barnes	S	5-11	193	Jr.	Westerville, OH
25 Josh Harvey-Clemons	S	6-5	230	Jr.	Valdosta, GA
36 Kevin Houchins	S	5-11	201	Jr.	South Euclid, OH
27 Jermaine Reve	S	6-0	192	Sr.	Miami, FL
28 Terrence Ross	S	6-1	208	So.	Apoka, FL
22 Chucky Williams	S	6-2	204	So.	Hialeah, FL
Specialists	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
40 Joshua Appleby	K	6-3	222	Sr.	Athens, AL
47 Jon Brown	K	5-10	202	So.	Clinton, MS
35 Anthony George	K	6-1	190	Jr.	Louisville
45 John Wallace	P/K	6-0	190	Sr.	Cecilia
84 Colin Holba	LS	6-5	233	Jr.	Louisville

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	31.2	50
Rushing	142.7	92
Passing	252.0	46
Total	394.7	69

DEFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	21.8	T-24
Rushing	108.9	10
Passing	199.6	26
Total	308.5	6

TO MARGIN	PER GAME	RANK
+ 4	+ 0.31	T-43

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	GP	Effic	Cmp	Att	Int	Pct	Yards	TD	Long	Avg/G
W. Gardner	8	136.1	127	221	3	57.5	1669	12	74	208.6
R. Bonnafon	10	118.4	61	120	4	50.8	864	5	52	86.4

RECEIVING

NAME	GP	No.	Yards	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
E. Rogers	13	45	525	11.7	3	28	40.4
D. Parker	6	43	855	19.9	5	71	142.5
J. Quick	12	36	566	15.7	3	74	47.2

RUSHING

NAME	GP	Att.	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
B. Radcliff	13	144	751	14	737	5.1	12	41	56.7
M. Dyer	9	110	534	53	481	4.4	5	46	53.4
D. Brown	13	96	397	19	378	3.9	4	33	29.1

DEF. LEADERS

Tackles: J. Sample 90, K. Kelsey 87, J. Burgess 71
Tackles for loss: S. Rankins 13.5, L. Mauldin 13, D. Mount 10.5
Sacks: S. Rankins 8, L. Mauldin 6.5, K. Kelsey 6
Interceptions: G. Holliman 14, J. Sample 4, J. Burgess 3

247SPORTS CARDINALS RECRUITING 2015

3 NEWCOMERS OF IMPACT

James Allen

One of Florida's top backs. He burst onto the scene as a senior, thanks to the arrival of new coach Stephen Field at the Citra (Fla.) North Marion program. Allen had some of the nation's best senior film. A country-strong back that's no-nonsense. Blessed with legit balance, quickness and vision, Allen could be an All-ACC back for the Cards in the years to come.

Lamar Jackson

One of the nation's top dual-threat quarterbacks. Similar to Auburn's Nick Marshall, but throws it better. He was a one-man show for Boynton Beach (Fla.). Jackson has the mobility, change-of-direction and developing skills as a passer to give Bobby Petrino a unique option at the position.

Khane Pass

A legit, hard-hitting safety out of national powerhouse Columbus (Ga.) Carver. Pass has the ball-hawking skills and athleticism to play the pass, while also being able to make any receiver or back pay for coming in his area. Pass is a ruthless hitter that plays with an edge.

SLEEPER

Traveon Samuel

A do-it-all athlete that projects to play slot receiver. Samuel has elite quickness and top-end burst. A big-time steal out of Alabama for the Louisville program.

2016 NEEDS

Louisville needs to sign a franchise quarterback this cycle to guide the program into the future. The Cardinals' staff will try to sign a pair of big backs and several speed receivers with size and length. Defensively, Louisville wants to add size up front and on the back end.

— Ryan Bartow

247SPORTS COMPOSITE

0	2	21	2
✪✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪	✪✪

Commitments	25
Average Stars	3.0
Total Stars	75
National Rank: 33	ACC: 7

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Jaire Alexander	CB	5-11	170	✪✪✪	Charlotte, NC	Rocky River
Ranked as the nation's No. 84 cornerback and No. 34 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded 30 tackles, four interceptions and 10 pass breakups in 12 games as a senior.						
James Allen	RB	5-10	180	✪✪✪	Citra, FL	North Marion
Ranked as the nation's No. 43 running back and No. 68 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Finished his high school career with 3,498 yards and 37 total touchdowns.						
Kevin Austin	OL	6-3	300	✪✪	Mesa, AZ	Mesa C. C.
Played center at Mesa, but is versatile and could play all offensive line positions ... Before playing at Mesa, he was a preferred walk-on at Auburn for one season.						
Drew Bailey	SDE	6-4	275	✪✪✪	Poplarville, MS	Pearl River C.C.
Ranked as the nation's No.117 junior college prospect according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 22 tackles and 10 sacks in 2014.						
Tim Bonner	WDE	6-5	225	✪✪✪	Demopolis, AL	Demopolis
Ranked as the nation's No. 61 weakside defensive end and No. 40 prospect in Alabama according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 84 total tackles, including 31 for loss and nine sacks as a senior…All-state selection.						
Amonte Caban	ILB	6-2	210	✪✪✪	Smiths Station, AL	Smiths Station
Ranked as the nation's No. 14 inside linebacker and No. 18 prospect in Alabama according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded 140 tackles and 16.0 tackles for loss as a senior.						
Alphonso Carter	WR	6-4	200	✪✪✪	Council Bluffs, IA	Iowa Western C.C.
Ranked as the nation's No. 87 junior college prospect according to the 247Sports Composite…Formerly Paul Harris, legally changed his name to Alphonso Carter…Began his college career at Tennessee.						
Geron Christian	OG	6-4	305	✪✪✪	Ocala, FL	Trinity Catholic
Ranked as the nation's No. 81 offensive guard and No. 188 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Brother of former Louisville tight end Gerald Christian.						
Devonte Fields	WDE	6-4	240	✪✪✪✪	Athens, TX	Trinity Valley C.C.
Ranked as the nation's No. 6 junior college prospect according to the 247Sports Composite… Began his college career at TCU… Selected as the AP Big 12 Defensive Player of the Year and Defensive Newcomer of the Year in 2012.						
Jonathan Greenard	OLB	6-4	220	✪✪✪	Hiram, GA	Hiram
Ranked as the nation's No. 82 outside linebacker and No. 130 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded 43 tackles and 7.0 sacks as a senior... Named to the 5-AAAAA all-region squad.						
Cole Hikutini	TE	6-5	240	✪✪✪	San Francisco, CA	City College of S.F.
Ranked as the nation's No. 154 junior college prospect according to the 247Sports Composite…Had 21 receptions and five touchdowns in 2013.						
Khalil Hunter	OT	6-4	290	✪✪✪	Thatcher, AZ	Eastern Arizona College
Ranked as the nation's No. 78 junior college prospect according to the 247Sports Composite… Was named a second-team junior-college All-American...Chose Louisville over Georgia, Mississippi State, Illinois, Purdue and others.						
Lamar Jackson	QB	6-3	185	✪✪✪	Boynton Beach, FL	Boynton Beach C.C
Ranked as the nation's No. 13 dual-threat quarterback and No. 58 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Named to the Class 6A Florida All-State first team… Had 1,293 passing yards and 20 touchdowns, and 1,039 rushing yards and 19 touchdowns in 2014.						
Chandler Jones	OG	6-4	310	✪✪✪	Powder Springs, GA	McEachern
Ranked as the nation's No. 58 offensive guard and No. 94 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Named to the all-region team for 4-AAAAAA.						
Kiola Mahoni	OG	6-3	305	✪✪	San Mateo, CA	College of San Mateo
Ranked as the nation's No. 215 junior college prospect according to the 247Sports Composite… Earned All-Bay 6 Conference honors at offensive line... Chose Louisville over offers from Cincinnati, Mississippi State and UNLV.						
Khane Pass	S	6-0	195	✪✪✪	Columbus, GA	Carver
Ranked as the nation's No. 39 safety and No. 57 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded 55 tackles, nine pass breakups and two interceptions as a junior.						
Devante Peete	WR	6-5	195	✪✪✪	Fort Lauderdale, FL	St. Thomas Aquinas
Ranked as the nation's No. 356 prospect overall, No. 43 wide receiver and No. 52 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 21 receptions for 388 yards and five scores as a senior... Named honorable mention All-County.						
G.G. Robinson	TE	6-4	260	✪✪✪	Lilburn, GA	Parkview
Ranked as the nation's No. 35 tight end and No. 103 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 48 total tackles, including 18.5 for a loss, and notched 7.5 sacks as a senior.						
Traveon Samuel	APB	5-8	180	✪✪✪	Phenix City, AL	Central
Ranked as the nation's No. 8 all-purpose back and No. 15 prospect in Alabama according to the 247Sports Composite… Rushed 111 times for 861 yards and 11 scores, while catching 39 passes for 553 yards and three touchdowns as a senior.						
Darius Smith	OLB	6-2	198	✪✪✪✪	Florence, AL	Florence
Ranked as the nation's No. 316 prospect overall, No. 24 outside linebacker and No. 11 prospect in Alabama according to the 247Sports Composite… Intercepted three passes and totaled 50 tackles, helping lead Florence to an 11-3 record as a senior... Averaged over 15.0 points per game and 7.0 rebounds per game in basketball.						
Jeremy Smith	RB	6-1	225	✪✪✪	Fresno, CA	Fresno City College
Ranked as the nation's No. 44 junior college prospect according to the 247Sports Composite… Ran for 1,735 yards and 17 touchdowns in 2014… Had a 447-yard, seven-touchdown game while at Hammond (La.) Magnet School.						
Jaylen Smith	WR	6-1	196	✪✪✪	Pascagoula, MS	Pascagoula
Ranked as the nation's No. 131 wide receiver and No. 27 prospect in Mississippi according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 70 receptions for 1,371 yards and 20 touchdowns as a senior.						
Trey Smith	APB	6-1	210	✪✪✪	Madison, MS	Madison Central
Ranked as the nation's No. 22 all-purpose back and No. 29 prospect in Mississippi according to the 247Sports Composite… Rushed for 1,473 yards and 12 touchdowns, passed for a score, and had 39 receptions for 491 yards and seven touchdowns as a junior…Participated in the Alabama-Mississippi All-Star Classic.						
Emonee Spence	WR	6-2	181	✪✪✪	Hollywood, FL	Charles W Flanagan
Ranked as the nation's No. 78 wide receiver and No. 81 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Caught 51 passes for 927 yards and nine touchdowns during his senior season.						
Kenny Thomas	OT	6-6	330	✪✪✪	Prattville, AL	Prattville
Ranked as the nation's No. 131 offensive tackle and No. 37 prospect in Alabama according to the 247Sports Composite… Voted to the Class 7A All-State and All-Metro first teams... Was a finalist for the 7A Lineman of the Year.						

PLAYER PROFILE

Bonnafon Expected to be The Guy for UL

There is no DeVante Parker this season for the University of Louisville. Losing a first-round NFL draft pick who caught nearly everything thrown his way and bailed out inconsistent quarterback play on a regular basis is beyond a big blow.

Sidelined with a broken foot that forced him to miss seven games, Parker still managed to catch 43 passes for 855 yards and five touchdowns, and Louisville's offense looked markedly better — and far more explosive — with the rangy 6-3 receiver in the fold.

How Louisville regroups on offense without Parker could go a long way toward the bottom line this fall.

That transition brings us to sophomore quarterback Reggie Bonnafon.

Bonnafon, a Louisville native who began last season as the understudy to Will Gardner, is expected to be *The Guy* once fall camp starts. He came to spring workouts looking stronger, bigger and faster, and his throwing accuracy improved enough to help him gain an advantage in a competition with Kyle Bolin and Penn State transfer Tyler Ferguson.

Even with Gardner expected to return in camp from knee surgery, and elite 2015 quarterback signee Lamar Jackson arriving on campus this summer, the job appears to be Bonnafon's for the taking.

Bonnafon was electric in the spring game, connecting on 15 of 19 passes for 238 yards and a touchdown. He ran for 37 yards and another score.

"I had the opportunity to play as a true freshman, and I think that worked to my advantage," Bonnafon said after the spring game. "This spring we knew the things I needed to work on to improve my game. I think the coaching staff really helped me to take that next step."

Bonnafon (6-3, 209) was pressed into starting duty last season when Gardner went out with a knee injury. With Bonnafon, Petrino has the kind of dual-threat quarterback who allows him to use the read option and other designed QB runs to keep defenses off balance. Last season, defenses came up to the line and forced Bonnafon to throw over the top.

He struggled doing that, completing just 50.8 percent of his passes and throwing four interceptions against five touchdowns. But the experience, paired with his increasingly chiseled frame and better accuracy, should help Bonnafon overcome Parker's absence.

"He's way ahead of where he was last year," Petrino said of Bonnafon, "and has better understanding of the offense."

QB
REGGIE BONNAFON
Photo by Bob DeChiara-USA TODAY Sports

BEST AND BRIGHTEST

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

LB KEITH KELSEY

Hard to choose between defensive leaders Keith Kelsey and LB James Burgess in terms of which player is more important. ... Kelsey finished second on the team with 87 tackles last fall, collecting a bunch as a gap-filling linebacker, but also showing his prowess in coverage. ... Also had six sacks and was credited with seven QB hurries. ... A physical, smart linebacker who helps orchestrate the defense. ... Son of former Florida linebacker Keith Kelsey Sr.

EMERGING STAR

RB BRANDON RADCLIFF

Started last season fourth on Louisville's running back depth chart and worked his way into the rotation. ... Built as a perfect every-down back who can bully tacklers but also make them miss. ... Finished as U of L's top rusher with 737 yards. ... Ran three times for 100-plus yards last fall, including a 136-yard performance against Notre Dame. ... With Michael Dyer and Dominique Brown gone, the lion's share of the carries will go to Radcliff.

TOP NEWCOMER

S JOSH HARVEY-CLEMONS

He's built like an outside linebacker or a tight end at 6-5, 230, but Harvey-Clemons is quick and strong enough to keep up with smaller, faster receivers in the secondary. ... A former blue-chip prospect who compiled 66 tackles and an interception as a sophomore at Georgia. ... Transferred to UL after the 2013 season and sat out last fall. ... Says his biggest goal this offseason is to become a more vocal leader.

Photos courtesy of Louisville Athletics.

SPECIAL TEAMS

A unit that struggled in some areas and excelled in others last season has experience returning at kicker and punter.

John Wallace (15 of 19 field goal attempts) is back for his final college season. He has proven to be reliable and expanded his range in 2014. Josh Appleby steps in at punter, but Ryan Johnson's replacement got some reps last fall, averaging 42.3 yards on six attempts.

Louisville won't have the speed of Charles Gaines, or the reliable hands of Eli Rogers and Kai De La Cruz as return men, but Brandon Radcliff, James Quick and a cast of newcomers can help.

SCHEDULE ANALYSIS

The season opener has been on U of L's radar for some time, and now that it's finally here, the Cardinals are a significant underdog in a high-profile matchup. Auburn, one of the favorites to win the loaded SEC West, awaits Louisville in the Chick-fil-A Kick-Off in Atlanta.

It doesn't get any easier from there.

Louisville plays host to Houston, with new head coach Tom Herman, a week later, before Clemson comes to town for a Thursday night game. Road trips to NC State and Florida State in October will be tough, as will be a November trip to Pittsburgh.

— Jeff Greer

MIAMI HURRICANES

For more coverage of the Hurricanes, visit miami.247Sports.com

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: James Coley **DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR:** Mark D'Onofrio **STADIUM:** Sun Life Stadium: 74,916

QB KAAYA TRIES TO TAKE THE HURRICANES HIGHER

There aren't a lot of coaches with more heat on him going into the season than Miami's Al Golden.

But considering the mess he inherited and dealt with during his first two years because of the Nevin Shapiro scandal, Golden's fall from favor seems a bit surprising. He didn't leave when presented chances to do so. Miami fans — often low in attendance, but high in criticism — may have set the standard in impatience.

Just 3,500 attended the team's spring quad game. In the past, attendance has been double or triple that.

In a recent Public Policy Polling study released by the *Florida Sun-Sentinel*, Golden has a 38 percent "pretty favorable" opinion and 12 percent "unfavorable" opinion. Golden's positive vibes with the fans have dropped 20 percent in the last year-and-a-half, and much of that is attributed to him keeping defensive coordinator Mark D'Onofrio. The two have worked together since their days at Temple.

After showing the potential to have a great finish with a three-game winning streak and a close loss to Florida State, the Hurricanes dropped their final four games to finish 6-7 last season.

Former players like Phillip Buchanon and Joaquin Gonzalez have portrayed their venom on social media. Julio Cortes, captain of the 1983 championship team, questioned D'Onofrio's scheme.

Miami suffered heavy personnel losses — seven players were taken in the NFL Draft — leading many to wonder how this team had a losing season.

Another 6-7 mark, or something close to that, would put pressure on Miami's administration to make a coaching change, but there's still appreciation in some corners for Golden's loyalty. And he has a contract through the 2019 season.

Here's another factor in Golden's favor: As of the beginning of June, Miami had more than 22 committed players — all from Florida — for its 2016 class. Several more were pledged for the 2016 class.

At some point, however, all that talent acquisition needs to result in wins, ACC title game appearances and upper-level bowl games.

OFFENSE

The Hurricanes went into last season with weapons at tailback and receiver, and an experienced offensive line, but a true freshman quarterback.

Everything is reversed now.

This season, quarterback Brad Kaaya is coming off a season in which he earned ACC Rookie of the Year honors, but tailback Duke Johnson and wide receiver Phillip Dorsett were NFL draft picks and the offensive line has only one full-time starter returning. Among those gone from the line is Ereck Flowers, the ninth overall pick in the draft.

Right guard Daniel Isidora has the most experience, but tackles Trevor Darling and Kc McDermott, guard Taylor Gadbois and center Nick Linder have seen a decent amount of playing time. Offensive coordinator James Coley was disappointed in the line this spring, hinting that incoming linemen could push for playing time.

Coley did come away pleased with how the team improved in third-down situations in the spring.

"We had more chunk plays, really flipped the field," Coley said. "Before, we were take-a-shot oriented."

Miami needs those chunk plays in order for the offense to stay on the field longer, particularly with the up-tempo style it plays. It improved to 29 minutes, 29 seconds in time of possession last season, but there were still games when it got off the field too quickly, putting undue pressure on the defense.

Kaaya appears to have a solid backup in Malik Rosier, who commanded the huddle and showed a strong arm and ability to run when the play breaks down.

Running back Joe Yearby, suspended for the spring game, will be pushed for carries by incoming freshman Mark Walton. Gus Edwards, a 230-pounder, was named top offensive performer in the spring. A shoulder injury kept Edwards out of the spring game, but Golden likes his ability to run in the red zone and get to the outside.

Miami has some experience at receiver, but needs a go-to guy and players who

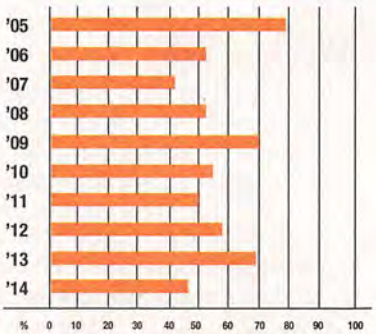
SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	'14 Record
Sept. 5	BETHUNE-COOKMAN	9-3
Sept. 11	at FAU	3-9
Sept. 19	NEBRASKA	9-4
Oct. 1	at Cincinnati	9-4
Oct. 10	at Florida State	13-1
Oct. 17	VIRGINIA TECH	7-6
Oct. 24	CLEMSON	10-3
Oct. 31	at Duke	9-4
Nov. 7	VIRGINIA	5-7
Nov. 14	at North Carolina	6-7
Nov. 21	GEORGIA TECH	11-3
Nov. 27	at Pittsburgh	6-7

RESULTS

6-7, 3-5		
L	at Louisville	13-31
W	FLORIDA A&M	41-7
W	ARKANSAS STATE	41-20
L	at Nebraska	31-41
W	DUKE	22-10
L	at Georgia Tech	17-28
W	CINCINNATI	55-34
W	at Virginia Tech	30-6
W	NORTH CAROLINA	47-20
L	FLORIDA STATE	26-30
L	at Virginia	13-30
L	PITTSBURGH	23-35
	Independence Bowl	
L	vs. South Carolina	21-24

10-YEAR WINNING TREND



AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:
Coral Gables, Fla.

2014:
6-7 overall, 3-5 ACC (T-5th, Coastal)

COACH:
Al Golden — At Miami: 28-22, 4 years; overall: 55-56, 9 years

RETURNING STARTERS:
9; 2 offense, 5 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH:
QB Brad Kaaya, RB Joseph Yearby, OG Daniel Isidora, LB Raphael Kirby, LB Tyriq McCord, DE Chad Thomas, S Deon Bush

PRIMARY STRENGTHS:
Kaaya should continue to progress at quarterback, provided he gets enough protection. The secondary should get more interceptions because of active corners and safeties, as well as an improved pass rush. Talented young players include RB Mark Walton and LB Charles Perry.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS:
Miami loses 111 career starts with the departure of LT Ereck Flowers, LG Jon Feliciano and C Shane McDermott. The return of RT Kc McDermott from a torn medial collateral ligament is crucial. There also are depth issues at linebacker, where Denzel Perryman isn't around to clean up everyone else's mistakes.

KEY LOSSES:
RB Duke Johnson, WR Phillip Dorsett, TE Clive Walford, LT Ereck Flowers, LG Jon Feliciano, C Shane McDermott, DE Anthony Chickillo, DT Olsen Pierre, ILB Denzel Perryman

OVERVIEW:
Considering how much talent Miami had — seven players were drafted (five in the first three rounds) — the Hurricanes were one of the nation's most underachieving teams last season. Still, that talent has to be replaced. Even with Kaaya, it looks like this could be another year of hovering around .500.

KEY NUMBER:
105TH Miami's national rank last season in tackles for loss (4.9 per game), a key stat in stopping drives and getting the defense off the field.

RB
Joseph
YEARBY
Photo by Joe Robbins

WR
STACY COLEY
Photo by Dennis Hubbard

SCOUTING REPORT: Offense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
QB	**Brad Kaaya***	So.	The program centerpiece in only his second season.	Malik Rosier, Fr.
RB	Joe Yearby	So.	Ran for 509 yards last season, ranking second on team.	Gus Edwards, Jr.
WR	Rashawn Scott	Sr.	Redshirted in 2014; made 35 catches back in 2012.	Tyre Brady, So.
WR	Stacy Coley	Jr.	Had 23 catches for 184 yards in 2014.	Herb Waters, Sr.
WR	Braxton Berrios	So.	Caught 21 passes for 232 yards, three TDs, last year.	Malcolm Lewis, Jr.
TE	Standish Dobard	Jr.	Earned praise throughout spring camp.	Jake O'Donnell, Jr
LT	Trevor Darling	So.	Promising future; started final five games last season at RT.	Jahair Jones, So.
LG	Taylor Gadbois	Jr.	Started the first five games of last season at RT.	Hunter Wells, Sr.
C	Nick Linder	So.	Started four games last season.	Alex Gall, Jr.
RG	**Daniel Isidora***	Jr.	Physically strong and Miami's most experienced OL.	Joe Brown, Fr.
RT	Kc McDermott	So.	Has recovered from MCL injury after playing in five games.	Sunny Odogwu, So.
PK	**Mike Badgley***	So.	Made 56-yarder in spring game with help from wind.	Justin Vogel, Jr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

SCOUTING REPORT: Defense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
DE	Al-Quadin Muhammad	So.	Coaches, teammates are raving about his potential.	Juwon Young, So.
DT	**Calvin Heurtelou***	Sr.	Made 25 tackles in 12 starts last season.	Courtel Jenkins, So.
DT	Ufomba Kamalu	Sr.	Scouts will love his physical tools; 34 tackles in 2014.	Corey King, Sr.
DE	Chad Thomas	So.	Showed some promise as a true freshman.	Jelani Hamilton, Jr.
LB	Jermaine Grace	Jr.	Ranked second on team with 60 tackles last year.	Marques Gayot, So.
LB	**Raphael Kirby***	Sr.	Had two picks, 54 tackles, last season.	Juwon Young, So.
LB	**Tyriq McCord***	Sr.	Moving from DE; considered turning pro after 2014.	Darrion Owens, So.
CB	**Artie Burns***	Jr.	Had 40 tackles and six pass break-ups last season.	Corn Elder, Jr.
CB	Tracy Howard	Sr.	Is this year he shows his full potential?	Ryan Mayes, Fr.
SS	Jamal Carter	Jr.	Had two interceptions in the spring game.	Jaquan Johnson, Fr.
FS	**Deon Bush***	Sr.	20 starts; one of Canes' best, most veteran players.	Dallas Crawford, Sr.
P	**Justin Vogel***	Jr.	Averaged 42.8 yards per punt last season.	Michael Badgley, So.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

won't drop the ball. Malcolm Lewis, Stacy Coley, Braxton Berrios and Herb Waters combined for almost 90 catches last year. If Rashawn Scott can stay healthy, he also can contribute.

Tight end Clive Walford and his 44 catches will be missed, but Standish Dobard was praised throughout the spring.

Who'll break out this season? Coley is a good bet. He's considered one of the team's hardest workers.

DEFENSE

Mark D'Onofrio's unit was respectable last season, as the defense ranked No. 14 nationally in total defense and ranked highly in yards yielded per play and explosive plays allowed. But his schemes have come under fire, and the defense had trouble getting off the field in losses to Nebraska, Georgia Tech, Virginia and Pittsburgh.

The biggest concern, by far, is at linebacker. Tackling machine Denzel Perryman's loss to the NFL is a big blow to a unit that lacked depth.

"We gotta get to six or seven (linebackers playing)," D'Onofrio said. "Last year we played five. We were lucky there were no injuries, but it was tough on those guys."

Jermaine Grace made a lot of plays in the spring and he needs to continue that. "He's got all the ability in the world," said D'Onofrio, who would like to see Grace add size to his 6-1, 208-pound frame.

Raphael Kirby showed some playmaking ability last season, but his overall play was suspect. He'll be asked to take Perryman's place. Tyriq McCord and Marques Gayot have converted to linebacker and will play. D'Onofrio likes true freshman Charles Perry. He would benefit by being redshirted, but lack of depth may not allow that.

If the linebacker situation can work itself out, Miami could have a respectable defense because its linemen have matured — physically and with experience — and its secondary has built depth.

There is reason to be excited about sophomore end Al-Quadin Muhammad, who is coming back from a semester suspension and is 15 pounds heavier. Defensive tackles Calvin Heurtelou and Ufomba Kamalu are seniors, while sophomore Chad Thomas might be ready to blossom. The same goes for Jelani Hamilton, who earned most improved defensive player honors this spring.

Senior corner Tracy Howard, and senior safeties Deon Bush and Dallas Crawford, appear ready to make their mark. Junior safety Jamal Carter showed big-play potential. Junior Rayshawn Jenkins looked leaner in the spring. Junior cornerback Corn Elder looks ready to emerge, and safety Jaquan Johnson is a talented freshman.

This group had a lot of interceptions in the spring.

"I thought they played physical," D'Onofrio said. "We took the ball away some, had a good amount of three-and-outs and I saw guys rallying to the ball."

SPECIAL TEAMS

At their best, the Hurricanes were good for multiple return TDs each season. That

NOTEBOOK

Duke Johnson carried the ball 242 times for Miami last season, and then there was a big drop-off to **Joe Yearby** (86 carries) and **Gus Edwards** (61 rushes). Yearby and Edwards are back this season, but only time will tell if either of those guys — or someone else — can separate from the pack as Johnson did.

Freshman **Mark Walton** seems to be most likely to crash the party, and the Canes also have sophomore **Trayone Gray** and junior **Walker Tucker**.

"We're going to have guys there," coach **Al Golden** said of the running back position.

"It may not be just one. It may be more getting several guys the same amount of touches. But if one of those guys separates themselves as Duke did, then he'll get the majority of the touches. Right now we're still in that phase where we're waiting to see if one of them breaks out.

"If not, we'll do it by committee. Either way, we're fine with it and excited about the direction that group is going."

• Miami doesn't have nearly the same amount of NFL-ready talent on this year's roster as it did a season ago. The team's top prospect for next summer's draft could very well be senior **Deon Bush**, who is rated as the fourth-best free safety in the 2016 class by NFLDraftScout.com.

The Hurricanes have produced 30 NFL draft picks since 2010 — that's an average of five per year — but just two were first-rounders. Those both came this year, as offensive lineman **Ereck Flowers** went ninth overall to the Giants, and receiver **Phillip Dorsett** was the 29th pick in the draft to the Colts.

In case you're keeping track, the Hurricanes have had a player drafted in 41 consecutive years.

• Miami committed 7.15 penalties per game (103rd nationally) for an average of 63.6 yards per game (105th nationally) last season. "We know what we have to fix, and we also know the individuals that have created the majority of those," Golden said. "If that can't change, then, obviously, we have to make some changes to fix the problem."

HURRICANES SPRING ROSTER

Quarterbacks		Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
13	Gray Crow	QB	6-3	224	Jr.	Clearwater
25	Isaac Hoza	QB	6-3	190	So.	Ft. Lauderdale
15	Brad Kaaya	QB	6-4	209	So.	West Hills, CA
12	Malik Rosier	QB	6-1	212	Fr.	Mobile, AL
14	Vincent Testaverde	QB	6-1	190	So.	Tampa
19	Clayton Turner	QB	6-4	220	So.	Marietta, GA
20	Michael Welch	QB	6-3	220	So.	Winnetka, IL
Running Backs		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
22	Collin Alford	RB	5-9	210	Jr.	Miami
7	Gus Edwards	RB	6-2	230	Jr.	Staten Island, NY
49	Joel Evans	RB	5-6	185	Fr.	Durham, NC
32	Trayone Gray	RB	6-2	215	So.	Miami
43	Tyler Odems	RB	6-0	240	Jr.	Manassas, VA
44	Walter Tucker	RB	6-0	226	Jr.	Plantation
2	Joseph Yearby	RB	5-9	195	So.	Miami
40	Matt Golden	FB	5-11	220	So.	Colts Neck, NJ
Wide Receivers		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
8	Braxton Berrios	WR	5-9	183	So.	Raleigh, NC
82	Tyre Brady	WR	6-3	204	So.	Homestead
3	Stacy Coley	WR	6-1	187	Jr.	Pompano Beach
84	Greg Golden	WR	6-3	195	So.	Red Bank, NJ
17	D'Mauri Jones	WR	6-4	196	Jr.	Leesburg
81	Darrell Langham	WR	6-4	212	Fr.	Lantana
9	Malcolm Lewis	WR	6-0	189	Jr.	Miramar
35	Austin Pfenninger	WR	5-8	168	So.	Carmel, IN
11	Rashawn Scott	WR	6-2	205	Sr.	Melbourne
6	Herb Waters	WR	6-2	195	Sr.	Homestead
Tight Ends		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
5	Standish Dobard	TE	6-4	262	Jr.	New Orleans, LA
23	Christopher Herndon IV	TE	6-4	255	So.	Norcross, GA
46	Marcus Lugo	TE	6-3	229	Fr.	Jamestown, NY
86	David Njoku	TE	6-4	240	Fr.	Cedar Grove, NJ
88	Jake O'Donnell	TE	6-7	258	Jr.	Doylestown, PA
38	Joseph Rogers	TE	6-2	238	Sr.	Miami
85	Michael Tashman	TE	6-2	220	Unk	Los Angeles, CA
87	Jerome Washington	TE	6-5	262	Fr.	Princeton Junction, NJ
Offensive Linemen		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
61	Adam Arnaout	OL	6-0	275	So.	Westlake Village, CA
55	Joe Brown	OL	6-4	331	Fr.	Paramount, CA
73	Trevor Darling	OL	6-5	318	So.	Miami
76	Taylor Gadbois	OL	6-8	321	Jr.	Dallas, GA
67	Alex Gall	OL	6-5	310	Jr.	Mason, OH
59	Justin Goldberg	OL	6-2	310	So.	Weston
69	Tyler Grimsley	OL	6-3	300	Fr.	Green Cove Springs
63	Danny Isidora	OL	6-4	322	Jr.	Weston
65	Sterling Jackson	OL	6-2	285	Fr.	Oviedo
77	Jahair Jones	OL	6-4	335	Fr.	Brooklyn, NY
54	Hunter Knighton	OL	6-6	300	So.	Pottstown, PA
68	Nick Linder	OL	6-3	300	So.	Ft. Lauderdale
52	Kc McDermott	OL	6-6	315	So.	Wellington
66	Sunny Odogwu	OL	6-8	322	So.	Ezeagu, Nigeria
64	Hunter Wells	OL	6-6	316	Sr.	Canton, IL
60	Patrick Petrillo	OT	6-7	305	So.	Hollywood, FL
Defensive Linemen		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
99	Jelani Hamilton	DL	6-5	302	Jr.	Fort Lauderdale
33	Trent Harris	DL	6-2	245	So.	Winter Park
93	Calvin Heurtelou	DL	6-3	315	Sr.	Spring Valley, NY
31	Demetrius Jackson	DL	6-5	250	Fr.	Miami
92	Courtel Jenkins	DL	6-1	315	So.	Wayne, NJ
47	Ufomba Kamalu	DL	6-6	295	Sr.	Fayetteville, GA
90	Corey King	DL	6-1	295	Sr.	Boca Raton
97	Earl Moore	DL	6-1	304	Jr.	Tampa
95	Anthony Moten	DL	6-4	305	So.	Ft. Lauderdale
8	Al-Quadin Muhammad	DL	6-3	260	So.	Irvington, NJ
19	Scott Patchan	DL	6-6	245	Fr.	Bradenton
9	Chad Thomas	DL	6-5	265	So.	Miami
11	Michael Wyche	DL	6-4	325	Sr.	Chesapeake, VA
Linebackers		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
41	Wyatt Chickillo	LB	6-0	224	So.	Miami
55	Frank Gabriel	LB	6-3	210	Jr.	Monmouth Beach, NJ
13	Marques Gayot	LB	6-1	220	So.	Lake Worth
53	Jared Goldenberg	LB	6-0	221	So.	Ramsey, NJ
5	Jermaine Grace	LB	6-1	208	Jr.	Miami Gardens
56	Raphael Kirby	LB	6-1	235	Sr.	Stone Mountain, GA
17	Tyriq McCord	LB	6-3	236	Sr.	Tampa
23	Terry McCray	LB	6-3	223	Fr.	Pompano Beach
59	Michael McGinnis	LB	6-2	225	So.	Allentown, NJ
58	Darrion Owens	LB	6-3	238	So.	Orange Park
34	Charles Perry	LB	6-1	212	Fr.	West Palm Beach
57	Mike Smith	LB	6-1	225	Fr.	Miami
36	Teddy Stavetski	LB	6-4	223	Fr.	Haddonfield, NJ
39	Chuck Sullivan	LB	5-11	223	So.	Cupertino, CA
51	Juwon Young	LB	6-2	245	So.	Albany, GA
Defensive Backs		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
1	Artie Burns	DB	6-0	193	Jr.	Miami
2	Deon Bush	DB	6-1	205	Sr.	Miami
6	Jamal Carter	DB	6-1	209	Jr.	Homestead
30	Quincy Casimir	DB	6-0	195	Jr.	Miami
25	Dallas Crawford	DB	5-10	200	Sr.	Fort Myers
29	Corn Elder	DB	5-10	180	Jr.	Nashville, TN
3	Tracy Howard	DB	5-11	188	Sr.	Miramar
26	Rayshawn Jenkins	DB	6-1	209	Jr.	St. Petersburg
4	Jaquan Johnson	DB	5-10	188	Fr.	Miami
24	Josh Johnson	DB	5-5	168	So.	Jacksonville
27	Ryan Mayes	DB	6-1	203	Fr.	Miami
Specialists		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
48	Josh Bacon	K/P	5-11	185	So.	Melville, NY
15	Michael Badgley	K/P	5-10	180	So.	Summit, NJ
97	JC Contorakes	K/P	6-1	190	So.	Miami
43	Jon Semerene	K	6-0	205	So.	Weston
40	Grant Coffman	P/K	5-8	182	So.	Dublin, OH
45	Ryan Holowesko	P/K	6-3	198	Sr.	West Simsbury, CT
16	Justin Vogel	P/K	6-4	208	Jr.	Tampa

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	29.2	59
Rushing	180.4	48
Passing	249.9	47
Total	430.3	44

DEFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	24.3	36
Rushing	137.1	30
Passing	192.5	17
Total	329.6	14

TO MARGIN	PER GAME	RANK
- 1	- 0.08	66

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	GP	Effic	Cmp	Att	Int	Pct	Yards	TD	Long	Avg/G
B. Kaaya	13	145.9	221	378	12	58.5	3198	26	79	246.0
J. Heaps	6	85.7	6	12	0	50.0	51	0	17	8.5

RECEIVING

NAME	GP	No.	Yards	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
C. Walford	12	44	676	15.4	7	61	56.3
D. Johnson	13	38	421	11.1	3	37	32.4
P. Dorsett	13	36	871	24.2	10	79	67.0

RUSHING

NAME	GP	Att.	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
D. Johnson	13	242	1691	39	1652	6.8	10	90	127.1
J. Yearby	12	86	520	11	509	5.9	1	62	42.4
G. Edwards	12	61	358	9	349	5.7	6	40	29.1

DEF. LEADERS

Tackles: D. Perryman 110, J. Grace 60, T. Armbrister 56
Tackles for loss: D. Perryman 9.5, T. Armbrister 8, two tied with 6.5
Sacks: T. Armbrister 5, U. Kamalu 3.5, three tied with 3
Interceptions: R. Kirby 2, D. Bush 2, L. Gunter 2

247SPORTS HURRICANES RECRUITING 2015

3 NEWCOMERS OF IMPACT

Jaquan Johnson
Cerebral, athletic safety that makes up for his lack of ideal size and speed with his instincts and football IQ. Early enrollee that figures to help Miami in the secondary.

Mark Walton
Explosive back that can make defenders miss in space and has home-run hitting ability. Walton has the vision, size potential and upside to be a great one for the Canes. Fluid in the pass or run game and adds a dynamic element on the perimeter or between the tackles.

Lawrence Cager
Rare out-of-state take at the position for the Hurricanes. Big perimeter receiver with good speed. The U.S. Army All-American, a four-star recruit, has elusive speed to go with solid ball skills.

SLEEPER

Scott Patchan
Has the frame and change of direction to help a pass-rush that's been non-existent the last few seasons for the Hurricanes in 3-4 read-and-react scheme. Patchan, a grinder, could be the Canes next Anthony Chickillo, a Tampa defensive end with versatility and a motor.

2016 NEEDS

Al Golden's regime has seen the best of the best prospects from south Florida take their talents elsewhere instead of staying home. Miami needs a major boost of local talent, the best ones, to stick around. It's the nation's No. 1 talent bin and has more speed and skill per capita than anywhere else. Miami's biggest needs are players with explosive speed, defensive tackles, secondary personnel and a complete overhaul of the personnel on the offensive line.

— Ryan Bartow

247SPORTS COMPOSITE

0	5	16	1
✪✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪	✪✪

Commitments	22
Average Stars	3.18
Total Stars	70
National Rank: 26	ACC: 3

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Lawrence Cager	WR	6-5	195	✪✪✪	Towson, MD	Calvert Hall College

U.S. Army All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 347 prospect overall, No. 41 wide receiver and No. 7 prospect in Maryland according to the 247Sports Composite…Had 50 catches for 580 yards and seven touchdowns in 2013.

Ryan Fines	DT	6-4	305	✪✪✪	Bradenton	IMG Academy

Ranked as the nation's No. 61 defensive tackle and No. 131 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Father played football at Western Carolina…Had 55 tackles and eight sacks as a senior.

Tyler Gauthier	OT	6-5	305	✪✪✪	Venice	Venice

Ranked as the nation's No. 111 offensive tackle and No. 138 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Earned first-team All-State honors…Saw action at every position on the offensive line during his high school career.

Jamie Gordinier	SDE	6-4	235	✪✪✪	Red Bank, NJ	Red Bank Catholic

Ranked as the nation's No. 43 strongside defensive end and No. 18 prospect in New Jersey according to the 247Sports Composite…Recorded 117 tackles as a senior.

Terrance Henley	CB	6-0	165	✪✪	Pompano Beach, FL	Blanche Ely

Ranked as the nation's No. 207 cornerback and No. 329 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Late addition to Miami class…Also had offers from FIU and Temple.

Michael Jackson	CB	6-2	190	✪✪✪	Birmingham, AL	Spain Park

Ranked as the nation's No. 56 cornerback and No. 20 prospect in Alabama according to the 247Sports Composite…Participated in the Alabama-Mississippi All-Star Classic…Had a team-high 12 tackles in that game.

Jaquan Johnson	S	5-10	188	✪✪✪✪	Miami	Killian

Enrolled in January…U.S. Army All-American… Ranked as the nation's No. 212 prospect overall, No. 13 safety and No. 29 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite... Four-time All-Dade first-team selection…Had 41 tackles and three interceptions as a senior.

Jahair Jones	OT	6-4	335	✪✪✪	Brooklyn, NY	ASA College

Enrolled in January…Ranked as the nation's No. 62 junior college prospect according to the 247Sports Composite.

James King	OLB	6-1	200	✪✪✪	Miami	Booker T. Washington

Ranked as the nation's No. 144 outside linebacker and No. 294 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Had 65 tackles, nine tackles for loss, two sacks and one interception as a senior.

Robert Knowles	S	6-1	185	✪✪✪	Miami	Edison

Ranked as the nation's No. 104 safety and No. 205 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Recorded 44 tackles, three tackles for loss, two sacks, seven pass breakups and three interceptions as a senior.

Brendan Loftus	OT	6-7	270	✪✪✪	Tallahassee	Amos P. Godby

Ranked as the nation's No. 88 offensive tackle and No. 107 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Played final three games with a broken foot and helped lead team to state championship game.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Hayden Mahoney	OT	6-5	285	✪✪✪	Malvern, PA	Malvern Prep

Ranked as the nation's No. 94 offensive tackle and No. 19 prospect in Pennsylvania according to the 247Sports Composite… Selected to the US National Under-19 football team… Chose Miami over Boston College and Northwestern.

Richard McIntosh	SDE	6-5	275	✪✪✪	Fort Lauderdale	Cardinal Gibbons

Ranked as the nation's No. 42 strongside defensive end and No. 96 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Recorded 71 tackles and 11 sacks as a senior.

Bar Milo	OT	6-6	270	✪✪✪✪	West Hills, CA	Chaminade

Semper Fidelis All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 217 prospect overall, No. 20 offensive tackle and No. 28 prospect in California according to the 247Sports Composite… Chose Miami over Arizona State, California, Nebraska and Washington.

Kendrick Norton	OG	6-3	305	✪✪✪	Jacksonville	Trinity Christian Academy

Under Armour All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 317 prospect overall, No. 27 offensive guard and No. 55 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Named Class 3A All-State.

Scott Patchan	SDE	6-5	237	✪✪✪	Bradenton	IMG Academy

Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 23 strongside defensive end and No. 63 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Had 56 tackles, 24 tackles for loss and 8.5 sacks as a junior.

Charles Perry	ATH	6-1	205	✪✪✪	West Palm Beach	Royal Palm Beach

Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 31 athlete and No. 62 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Recorded 78 tackles, seven sacks, one interception and rushed for 582 yards and seven touchdowns as a junior.

Sheldrick Redwine	CB	6-1	183	✪✪✪	Miami	Killian

Ranked as the nation's No. 69 cornerback and No. 92 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Had 81 tackles and two interceptions as a junior.

Evan Shirreffs	QB	6-5	195	✪✪✪	Jefferson, GA	Jefferson

Ranked as the nation's No. 61 pro-style quarterback and No. 166 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite…Completed 136 of 236 passes for 2,784 yards and 23 touchdowns as a senior.

Tyree St. Louis	OT	6-5	300	✪✪✪✪	Bradenton	IMG Academy

Under Armour All-American… Ranked as the nation's No. 294 prospect overall, No. 31 offensive tackle and No. 42 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite.

Mark Walton	RB	5-10	179	✪✪✪✪	Miami	Booker T. Washington

Ranked as the nation's No. 83 prospect overall, No. 10 running back and No. 14 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Rushed for 1,470 yards and 22 touchdowns and had 24 receptions for 282 yards and four scores as a senior.

Jerome Washington	TE	6-5	262	✪✪✪✪	Princeton Junction, NJ	Mercer County C.C.

Enrolled in January…Ranked as the nation's No. 19 junior college prospect according to the 247Sports Composite.

PLAYER PROFILE

Follow the Leader: Kaaya Taking Control

As Miami's offense struggled at the start of the team's final scrimmage this spring, quarterback Brad Kaaya paced the sidelines, imploring his offensive teammates to pick it.

"Let's wake up, let's get going!" said the sophomore quarterback.

After a couple of his passes went off teammates' hands and were picked off, he tried calming them down at halftime. For Kaaya, he has to do whatever it takes.

Despite being on campus for less than a year, Kaaya has been thrust into a leadership role for the Hurricanes. Last fall, the true freshman won the starting job in the fall over Kansas transfer Jake Heaps after Ryan Williams tore a ligament.

He started every game, throwing for 3,198 yards, with 26 touchdowns and 12 interceptions.

While the spring picks bothered Miami coach Al Golden, he definitely has noticed Kaaya's interactions with teammates.

"He's a leader now," Golden said.

"There's a difference between being a quarterback and a quarterback who's a leader. He's the leader. He's very comfortable in his own skin. He's imposing his will on things. If he doesn't like things, he shares it and communicates. When I'm out next to him, I see subtle coaching points he makes."

Kaaya said it's easier to be a leader now that he's established himself. His demeanor shows confidence. He's more comfortable with the media. His head stays up.

That also shows in pocket presence.

"I think he's more patient," offensive coordinator James Coley said. "Before, he was bouncing all over the place at the line of scrimmage. In his drops, he'd be hit by the tackle or guard.

"(In the final scrimmage), he had a nice scramble when the pocket broke down. He hit Stacy (Coley) with a nice pass. His feet are a lot more calm. He gets it now."

Photo by Mike Jula for Fostoff

Kaaya's next challenge is to help his receivers understand the scheme, their roles, and that mistakes are part of growth.

"You just have to keep playing," he said. "... There are always ups and downs in every game, mountains to climb."

One thing that makes him uncomfortable is the attention he receives. Kaaya knows how important it is for him to have weapons on offense and a good supporting cast on defense.

When told that people's eyes light up when they're asked about him, he replied, sounding like a leader: "We need to have their eyes light up when they talk about the whole team."

BEST AND BRIGHTEST

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

QB BRAD KAAYA

There is a lot of pressure on the true sophomore. ... The 6-4, 209-pounder set a Miami true freshman record with 342 passing yards against Arkansas State. ... In the next week against Nebraska, he broke that mark with 359 yards, while throwing TDs to three different players. ... Was not intercepted during a three-game winning streak vs. Cincinnati, Virginia Tech and North Carolina. ... Passing efficiency rating of 145.9 was second nationally among freshmen behind Ohio State's J.T. Barrett.

EMERGING STAR

DE CHAD THOMAS

Thomas was a five-star recruit who chose Miami over Alabama, Florida State, Arkansas and Duke. ... He could have used a redshirt season, but he played in 12 games last season as a true freshman, making seven tackles, including one for loss. Also recovered a fumble. ... Needs to keep motor humming. ... Strengthened his 6-5, 265-pound body in the spring and kept progressing. ... Part of an improving defensive line.

TOP NEWCOMER

RB MARK WALTON

Walton, a four-star recruit, chose Miami over Auburn, Florida State, Tennessee and South Carolina. ... Ran for 184 yards and three TDs, and added another 89 yards and two TDs receiving, as Miami's Booker T. Washington High won the state title game. ... "His desire to be successful is unquestioned," Miami RB coach Tim Harris said. "No matter the situation, he's willing to put his team on his back. He is a guy that plays at another level."

Photos courtesy of Miami Athletics.

unit had little pop last year. Stacy Coley's long returns were 41 yards and 29 on kicks and punts, respectively. Maybe freshmen Mark Walton or Jaquan Johnson can help.

The kicking game is solid. Kicker Mike Badgley made 14 of 18 field goal attempts last season and had a lot of 50-yarders this spring. "He's got a rocket; he's stronger than he was," Golden said. Punter Justin Vogel had a 42.8-yard average last season.

SCHEDULE ANALYSIS

The Hurricanes will open with games against Bethune-Cookman and Florida Atlantic. Nebraska, with new coach Mike Riley, comes into town for what should be a tough contest on Sept. 19. Then, Miami has 12 days to prepare for its road game at dangerous-but-defensively-challenged Cincinnati.

Does that look more like 4-0 or 2-2?

The middle stretch of the season is brutal: at Florida State, vs. Virginia Tech, vs. Clemson and at Duke.

The season closes with home games vs. Virginia and Georgia Tech, and road games against North Carolina and Pittsburgh.

There might be more than six wins there, but it's hard to expect Miami to push its way back to elite status, given the personnel losses the team suffered from last season.

— Craig Handel

NORTH CAROLINA TAR HEELS

For more coverage of the Tar Heels, visit northcarolina.247Sports.com

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Seth Littrell **DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR:** Gene Chizik **STADIUM:** Kenan Stadium: 63,000

MOMENT IS NOW? COULD BE, IF CHIZIK IMPROVES D

Larry Fedora entered his third season as North Carolina's head coach in 2014 saying, "It's time."

Time for the Tar Heels to take a significant step forward. Time for the Tar Heels to win an ACC Coastal Division championship.

Nope. The 2014 season was not UNC's time.

Not with a defense that was among the worst in school history, and not with an offense that was prone to breakdowns and inconsistency — a lot of that thanks in no small part to an inexperienced offensive line.

After a disappointing 6-7 finish in 2014, the good news for UNC is this: There's reason to believe that Fedora simply might have been a year early with his "it's time" proclamation. UNC won't enter the 2015 season surrounded by high expectations — at least not externally — but there are some things to like.

For one, the Tar Heels won't lack for experience. Motivation should be in good supply. And, oh yes, the arrival of Gene Chizik should help matters, too.

Fedora hired Chizik, one of the best available defensive coaches on the market, to fix a defense that almost can't be any worse than it was a season ago, when it ranked 117th nationally.

Chizik's arrival has inspired optimism among the Tar Heels supporters, whose patience has been tested more often than not since Mack Brown left for Texas at the end of the 1997 season. That seems like ancient history for good reason, but it has been that long since UNC won more than eight games.

It's possible, and not terribly unrealistic, that UNC finally breaks through that barrier this season. The schedule is favorable; the defense has to be improved — right? — and everybody of significance is back on offense.

Quietly, some close to the program have said that this is the season Fedora has been building toward for a while. The time is now?

OFFENSE

As bad as North Carolina's defense was last fall, the offense wasn't much better at the end of the season during embarrassing losses against NC State (in the regular-season finale) and against Rutgers in the Quick Lane Bowl. Still, the Tar Heels this season will likely go as far as the offense takes them.

Senior quarterback Marquise Williams missed spring practice while rehabilitating from surgery to address a hip injury, though he's expected to be full strength well before the start of preseason practice. He split time with Mitch Trubisky early last season in a controversial quarterback rotation that rarely produced good results.

Williams, who last season compiled more than 3,800 yards of total offense, shouldn't have to look over his shoulder entering this season, and that could lead to more offensive consistency early on in games. As successful as Williams has been at times in his two seasons as a starter, decision-making remains a work in progress.

Williams has a good amount of help, at least. UNC's running game was at times a mess last fall because of inexperience on the line and in the backfield, but pretty much everyone is back.

If the line improves — and that's the most important question facing the offense — then T.J. Logan and Elijah Hood have the potential to be one of the best running back tandems in the ACC. They complement each other well, with Logan known for his speed and quickness, and Hood playing the role of the prototypical bruising back.

The Tar Heels also return their top four receivers, including Mack Hollins, who emerged as one of the best deep threats in the ACC last season. He went from arriving on campus as a walk-on to providing some of UNC's most memorable highlights last season.

Ryan Switzer caught 61 passes last season, but didn't excel on special teams after returning five punts for touchdowns during his freshman season. Hollins excelled in moments, and Quinshad Davis and Bug Howard are solid possession receivers.

If the line comes together — again, no small question, but almost everyone returns from last season — UNC has a chance for a memorable season on offense.

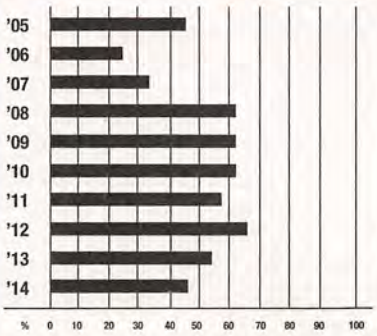
SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	'14 Record
Sept. 3	vs. South Carolina (Charlotte, NC)	7-6
Sept. 12	NORTH CAROLINA A&T	9-3
Sept. 19	ILLINOIS	6-7
Sept. 26	DELAWARE	6-6
Oct. 3	at Georgia Tech	11-3
Oct. 17	WAKE FOREST	3-9
Oct. 24	VIRGINIA	5-7
Oct. 29	at Pittsburgh	6-7
Nov. 7	DUKE	9-4
Nov. 14	MIAMI	6-7
Nov. 21	at Virginia Tech	7-6
Nov. 28	at NC State	8-5

RESULTS

	6-7, 4-4	
W	LIBERTY	56-29
W	SAN DIEGO STATE	31-27
L	at East Carolina	41-70
L	at Clemson	35-50
L	VIRGINIA TECH	17-34
L	at Notre Dame	43-50
W	GEORGIA TECH	48-43
W	at Virginia	28-27
L	at Miami	20-47
W	PITTSBURGH	40-35
W	at Duke	45-20
L	NC STATE	7-35
	Quick Lane Bowl	
L	vs. Rutgers	21-40

10-YEAR WINNING TREND



AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:
Chapel Hill, N.C.

2014 RECORD:
6-7 overall, 4-4 ACC (T-3rd, Coastal)

COACH:
Larry Fedora — At North Carolina: 21-17, 3 years; overall: 55-36, 7 years

RETURNING STARTERS:
17; 10 offense, 6 defense, kicker

PLAYERS TO WATCH:
QB Marquise Williams, RB T.J. Logan, RB Elijah Hood, WR Ryan Switzer, WR Mack Hollins, DT Nazair Jones, LB Jeff Schoettmer

PRIMARY STRENGTHS:
Williams is a senior who was among the most productive quarterbacks in the ACC last season, and there are a lot of others capable of making plays on offense, from Switzer and Hollins at receiver to Logan and Hood in the backfield. The offensive line returns intact, but has to take a significant step forward.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS:
The entire defense was a problem last season and it remains to be seen how much improvement is realistic in year one under Chizik. The lack of a pass rush hurt the Tar Heels last year, and pass coverage was often abysmal.

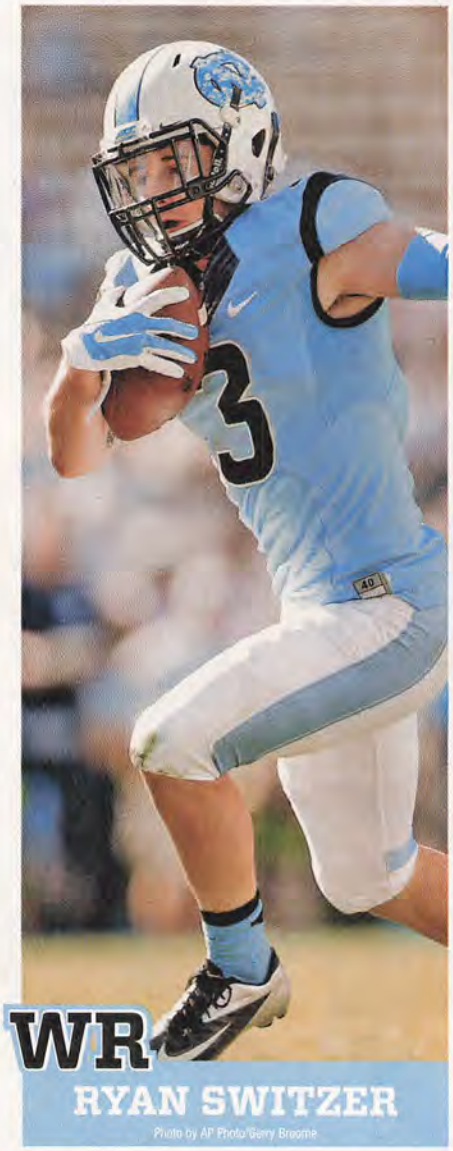
KEY LOSSES:
DT Ethan Farmer, LB Travis Hughes, S Tim Scott

OVERVIEW:
Fedora has faced significant off-the-field challenges during his tenure — he arrived when UNC was under an NCAA investigation, and the NCAA recently named specific charges against the program — so his recruiting efforts have taken a hit. In some ways, then, it's unfair to judge the state of his program. On the field, though, UNC has gone backward since his arrival. This year, the Tar Heels have enough offensively to win at least eight games and finish near the top of the Coastal Division.

KEY NUMBER:
6 The number of times UNC scored at least 40 points in a game last season.

LB
Jeff
SCHOETTMER

Photo by AP Photo/Margaret Bowles



WR
RYAN SWITZER
Photo by AP Photo/Gerry Broome

SCOUTING REPORT: Offense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
QB	**Marquise Williams***	Sr.	Healthy post-surgery and a dark horse POY candidate.	Mitch Trubisky, So.
RB	**T.J. Logan***	Jr.	Has star potential, but will he get enough carries?	Elijah Hood, So.
WR	**Mack Hollins***	Jr.	Deep threat averaged 17.5 yards per catch last season.	Bug Howard, Jr.
WR	**Ryan Switzer***	Jr.	Difficult matchup in slot with quickness to score any time.	Austin Proehl, So.
WR	**Quinshad Davis***	Sr.	Catches, yards have decreased past two seasons.	Damien Washington, Sr.
TE	Kendrick Singleton	Sr.	Former WR switches positions to fill a void.	Brandon Fritts, Fr.
LT	Bentley Spain	So.	Among team's most heralded frosh in 2014; now healthy.	William Sweet, Fr.
LG	**Caleb Peterson***	Jr.	Started 22 games past two seasons, came on late last year.	Jared Cohen, So.
C	**Lucas Crowley***	Jr.	Slowed by ankle injury late last season, but now healthy.	Will Dancy, Sr.
RG	**Landon Turner***	Sr.	Anchor of the line enters fall as an All-American candidate.	Brad Henson, So.
RT	**Jon Heck***	Jr.	Much improved after 23 starts the past two seasons.	**John Ferranto, Jr.***
PK	**Nick Weiler***	Jr.	Excellent kickoff man must improve FG accuracy.	Freeman Jones, Fr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

SCOUTING REPORT: Defense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
DE	**Dajaun Drennon***	So.	Potential was bright spot for a bad defense in 2014.	Junior Gnonkonde, Jr.
DT	Nazair Jones	So.	Had team-high 7.5 tackles for loss in 2014.	Tyler Powell, So.
DT	**Justin Thomason***	Sr.	Veteran healthy after missing spring with injury.	Jeremiah Clarke, Fr.
DE	Jessie Rogers	Sr.	Has been versatile backup in first three seasons.	Mikey Bart, Jr.
LB	Joe Jackson	Jr.	Only seven career tackles, but coaches like potential.	Cayson Collins, So.
LB	**Jeff Schoettmer***	Sr.	Combined 161 tackles the past two seasons.	Dan Mastromatteo, Jr.
LB	Shakeel Rashad	Sr.	Moves from hybrid "bandit" to LB in new 4-3 scheme.	Tyrell Tomlin, So.
CB	**Brian Walker***	Jr.	Led team with three interceptions last season.	M.J. Stewart, So.
CB	**Des Lawrence***	Jr.	Second-leading returning tackler, behind Schoettmer.	Malik Simmons, Sr.
SS	**Dominquie Green***	Jr.	Former walk-on seeks to regain freshman form.	J.K. Britt, Fr.
FS	Sam Smiley	Sr.	His 52 tackles last season are third-most among returnees.	Donnie Miles, So.
P	Corbin Daly	Fr.	One of nation's top punting prospects as HS senior.	Joey Mangili, Jr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

DEFENSE

The Tar Heels' defense was horrific last season, which is why Fedora parted ways with coordinator Vic Koenning and hired Gene Chizik, who was probably the best available coach for hire.

Chizik is best known for his work as a head coach at Auburn, where he led the Tigers to the 2010 national championship. Bringing respectability to UNC's defense wouldn't be as memorable an accomplishment, but it might be as difficult.

Chizik faces a monumental rebuilding task. His scheme — a more traditional 4-3 alignment replaces the gimmicky 4-2-5 that Koenning used — should help. The question is: How much improvement is realistic, given how bad this group was last year.

Given UNC's comprehensive defensive woes a season ago — the Tar Heels allowed at least 40 points six times, and gave up an average of nearly 500 yards per game — it's fair to question whether the Tar Heels are talented enough to show significant defensive improvement.

UNC's pass rush was often non-existent last year. The defensive line is a question mark entering the preseason, though Dajaun Drennon and Nazair Jones both showed promise up front during their redshirt freshman seasons.

Jeff Schoettmer, a former walk-on, is a leader at linebacker, but, overall, there are a lot of questions at that position group, particularly on the outside.

Cayson Collins showed potential during his freshman season last year, but he was supplanted in the spring by Joe Jackson. On the other side, Shakeel Rashad is moving from the hybrid bandit position in the old scheme to outside linebacker in the new. He'll have to adapt quickly.

The secondary doesn't lack for talent, especially at cornerback. But Des Lawrence and Brian Walker have a ways to go before meeting their considerable potential. Bottom line: Don't expect Chizik to work miracles in his first season.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Ryan Switzer remains one of the nation's most respected punt returners because of what he accomplished two years ago, but he never got going last season. After returning five punts for touchdowns in his freshman season, Switzer didn't find the end zone last season. Still, opposing teams will be wary of giving him any kind of space on returns.

Outside of Switzer's relative struggles, UNC's biggest special teams disappointment was an inability to make field goal attempts of longer than 30 yards.

Now-departed kicker Thomas Moore and Nick Weiler combined to make 6 of 13 field goal attempts, and UNC's inability to make medium-range field goals — or longer — hampered the offense. That has to improve this season.

NOTEBOOK

The Tar Heels have worked some late-season magic in each of the past two seasons, but they need to figure out a way to transfer that to the first half of the season. UNC lost four consecutive games in the first half of the 2013 and 2014 seasons, only to rebound to make the postseason after back-to-back 2-4 starts.

• If the Tar Heels do struggle early, the prospect of a second-half turnaround would be daunting. UNC's final five opponents of the season — Pittsburgh, Duke, Miami, Virginia Tech and NC State — all made bowl games last season. The Tar Heels went 2-3 against those teams last season.

• **Gene Chizik** was UNC's most notable offseason coaching hire, but he was hardly the only one. The entire defensive staff is new, with **Tray Scott** coaching the defensive line, **John Papuchis** coaching linebackers, and **Charlton Warren** the secondary.

Not one member of the defensive coaching staff from last year is back this season.

• Between 2008 and 2014, UNC was nearly as good as anybody in the country when it came to producing top NFL draft picks. UNC during that span had the fifth-most first-round picks of any school, behind Alabama, LSU, Florida and USC.

This year, though, for the first time since 2007, UNC didn't have a player chosen during the draft.

The Tar Heels will be back in draft business in 2016 with multiple prospects, likely led by offensive guard **Landon Turner**.

• This is the second time in three years that UNC is opening the season against South Carolina. The Tar Heels, who play the Gamecocks in Charlotte on Sept. 3, endured a 27-10 defeat at South Carolina to open the 2013 season. UNC next season will open against an SEC opponent on a neutral site, too, when it plays against Georgia in the Chick-fil-A Kickoff.

• The Tar Heels open conference play on Oct. 3 at Georgia Tech, where UNC will have a chance to do something it hasn't since 1997: win a game at Bobby Dodd Stadium. Since then the Tar Heels are 0-8 on the road against the Yellow Jackets.

TAR HEELS SPRING ROSTER

Quarterbacks	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
11 Kanler Coker	QB	6-4	220	Jr.	Flowery Branch, GA
Nathan Elliott	QB	6-1	195	Fr.	Celina, TX
6 Caleb Henderson	QB	6-3	215	Fr.	Burke, VA
17 Anthony Ratliff-Williams	QB	6-1	195	Fr.	Matthews
10 Mitch Trubisky	QB	6-3	215	So.	Mentor, OH
12 Marquise Williams	QB	6-2	220	Sr.	Charlotte
Running Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
27 Charles Brunson	RB	5-11	205	Jr.	Winston-Salem
1 Khris Francis	RB	5-9	200	Jr.	Durham
34 Elijah Hood	RB	6-0	220	So.	Charlotte
8 T.J. Logan	RB	5-10	185	Jr.	Greensboro
21 Romar Morris	RB	5-10	190	Sr.	Salisbury
30 Tyler Royal	RB	5-11	195	Jr.	Faison
9 Ty'Son Williams	RB	6-0	220	Fr.	Sumter, SC
Wide Receivers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
18 Josh Cabrera	WR	6-3	205	Fr.	Jacksonville
14 Quinshad Davis	WR	6-4	210	Sr.	Gaffney, SC
28 Dante DiMaggio	WR	6-2	195	Fr.	Apex
88 Jordan Fieulleteau	WR	6-3	210	So.	Raleigh
13 Mack Hollins	WR	6-4	210	Jr.	Rockville, MD
84 Bug Howard	WR	6-5	210	Jr.	Rochelle, GA
48 Thomas Jackson	WR	5-11	185	So.	Charlotte
5 Juval Mollette	WR	6-4	205	Fr.	Randleman
85 Devin Perry	WR	6-2	195	Fr.	Memphis, TN
7 Austin Proehl	WR	5-10	175	So.	Charlotte
89 Dalton Stogner	WR	6-4	200	Jr.	Dallas, TX
3 Ryan Switzer	WR	5-10	185	Jr.	Charleston, WV
87 Taylor Vippolis	WR	5-9	175	Jr.	Stony Brook, NY
35 Damien Washington	WR	6-1	190	Sr.	Kannapolis
Tight Ends	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
Jake Bargas	TE	6-4	225	Fr.	Boca Raton, FL
82 Brandon Fritts	TE	6-4	240	Fr.	Mentor, OH
Charlie Heck	TE	6-7	255	Fr.	Kansas City, MO
81 Kendrick Singleton	TE	6-2	205	Sr.	Macclenny, FL
86 Carl Tucker	TE	6-2	225	Fr.	Cornelius
Offensive Linemen	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
64 Thomas Bernhardt	OL	6-3	290	So.	Raleigh
Tommy Hatton	OL	6-3	285	Fr.	Montvale, NJ
63 Harris Hite	OL	6-6	295	Sr.	Apex
Nick Polino	OL	6-4	275	Fr.	Buford, GA
67 Caleb Samuel	OL	6-5	290	Fr.	Macon, GA
69 Jonathan Trull	OL	6-4	300	Fr.	Charlotte
62 Mark Uptegraff	OL	6-2	295	Fr.	Charlotte
66 Myers Colvin	OT	6-5	315	Sr.	Fayetteville
77 John Ferranto	OT	6-6	295	Jr.	Burlington, NJ
71 Jon Heck	OT	6-7	300	Jr.	Jacksonville, FL
75 Bentley Spain	OT	6-6	300	So.	Charlotte
51 William Sweet	OT	6-7	285	Fr.	Jacksonville, FL
65 Jared Cohen	OG	6-3	305	So.	Owings Mills, MD
74 Will Dancy	OG	6-4	310	Sr.	Graham
73 Brad Henson	OG/C	6-5	295	So.	Surf City, NJ
70 Caleb Peterson	OG	6-5	300	Jr.	Auburn, AL
78 Landon Turner	OG	6-4	325	Sr.	Harrisonburg, VA
72 Mason Veal	OG	6-5	290	Fr.	Charlotte
68 Lucas Crowley	C	6-3	290	Jr.	Ponte Vedra, FL
Defensive Linemen	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
49 Jeremiah Clarke	DL	6-5	310	Fr.	Alexandra, VA
84 Ian Dibble	DL	6-1	230	Jr.	Charlotte
93 Robert Dinkins	DL	6-1	270	Fr.	Charlotte
95 Tyler Powell	DL	6-4	290	So.	Midlothian, VA
91 Jonathan Sugg	DL	6-2	225	Fr.	Stokesdale
Aaron Crawford	DT	6-1	310	Fr.	Ashburn, VA
90 Nazair Jones	DT	6-5	300	So.	Roanoke Rapids
94 R.J. Prince	DT	6-6	320	So.	Albemarle
98 Justin Thomason	DT	6-4	290	Sr.	McDonough, GA
45 Mikey Bart	DE	6-3	270	Jr.	Buford, GA
97 Jalen Dalton	DE	6-6	260	Fr.	Clemmons
17 Dajaun Drennon	DE	6-4	250	So.	Clementon, NJ
44 Junior Gnonkonde	DE	6-4	260	Jr.	Lakeland, GA
43 Jessie Rogers	DE	6-4	270	Sr.	Arlington, TX
Jason Strowbridge	DE	6-4	250	Fr.	Deerfield Beach, FL
Linebackers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
51 Alex Bales	LB	6-3	225	Jr.	Kansas City, MO
53 Malik Carney	LB	6-3	220	Fr.	Alexandria, VA
23 Cayson Collins	LB	6-1	235	So.	Charlotte
34 Cole Holcomb	LB	6-0	210	Fr.	New Smyrna Beach, FL
32 Joe Jackson	LB	6-2	225	Jr.	Jacksonville, FL
47 Dan Mastromatteo	LB	6-2	235	Jr.	Absecon, NJ
52 Kemmi Pettway	LB	6-2	240	So.	Charlotte
57 Marlon Petty	LB	6-0	190	Fr.	McLeansville
42 Shakeel Rashad	LB	6-2	245	Sr.	Jacksonville, FL
10 Jeff Schoettmer	LB	6-2	235	Sr.	Dallas, TX
56 Andre Smith	LB	6-0	235	Fr.	Jacksonville, FL
54 Michael Steinbacher	LB	6-2	220	So.	Concord
Johnathon Sutton	LB	5-11	220	Fr.	Swansea, SC
20 Tyrell Tomlin	LB	5-11	230	So.	Marietta, GA
Defensive Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
40 Ben Craig	DB	5-10	180	Jr.	Huntersville
25 Jalen Dickerson	DB	5-11	185	Fr.	Richlands
35 Chris Ripberger	DB	5-11	190	Fr.	Greensboro
Corey Bell	CB	5-9	170	Fr.	Charlotte
19 Kedrick Davis	CB	5-10	180	Jr.	Charlotte
16 Alex Dixon	CB	6-0	195	Sr.	Clearwater, FL
Mike Hughes	CB	5-11	185	Fr.	New Bern
37 T.J. Jiles	CB	5-11	180	Sr.	Cape Coral, FL
2 Des Lawrence	CB	6-1	185	Jr.	Charlotte
12 Andrew Moore	CB	5-11	190	Jr.	Chapel Hill
48 Shaquille Price	CB	6-1	210	Sr.	Irmo, SC
6 M.J. Stewart	CB	5-11	200	So.	Arlington, VA
5 Brian Walker	CB	5-11	185	Jr.	Charlotte
31 Cameron Albright	S	6-1	210	So.	Kennesaw, GA
4 Allen Artis	S	6-1	205	So.	Marietta, GA
29 Jeff Battle	S	6-1	205	Sr.	Lenoir
24 Ayden Bonilla	S	6-1	210	Fr.	Woodstock, GA
21 J.K. Britt	S	6-0	190	Fr.	Newnan, GA
26 Dominquie Green	S	5-11	190	Jr.	Laurinburg
15 Donnie Miles	S	5-11	205	So.	Lawrenceville, GA
11 Malik Simmons	S	5-11	190	Sr.	Lehigh Acres, FL
3 Sam Smiley	S	5-11	190	Sr.	Jacksonville, FL
Specialists	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
98 Freeman Jones	PK	6-0	195	Fr.	Bunn
20 Will O'Briant	PK	6-1	190	So.	Asheboro
24 Nick Weiler	PK	6-0	190	Jr.	Fairfax Station, VA
31 Blake Bozymski	P	6-1	190	So.	Winston-Salem
90 Corbin Daly	P	6-3	200	Fr.	Charlotte
23 Joey Mangili	P	6-3	205	Jr.	Durham
61 Hunter Crafford	LS/LB	6-2	225	So.	Greenville
60 Kyle Murphy	LS	6-2	225	Fr.	Charlotte

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	33.2	36
Rushing	151.4	84
Passing	278.4	27
Total	429.8	45

DEFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	39.0	T-116
Rushing	240.5	117
Passing	257.4	101
Total	497.9	117

TO MARGIN	PER GAME	RANK
+0	+0.00	T-59

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	GP	Effic	Cmp	Att	Int	Pct	Yards	TD	Long	Avg/G
M. Williams	13	135.3	270	428	9	63.1	3068	21	91	236.0
M. Trubisky	12	114.2	42	78	4	53.8	459	5	39	38.2

RECEIVING

NAME	GP	No.	Yards	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
R. Switzer	13	61	757	12.4	4	75	58.2
B. Howard	13	42	455	10.8	2	35	35.0
Q. Davis	13	41	470	11.5	6	26	36.2

RUSHING

NAME	GP	Att.	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
M. Williams	13	193	1051	263	788	4.1	13	52	60.6
T.J. Logan	13	119	599	17	582	4.9	3	47	44.8
R. Morris	12	65	297	19	278	4.3	4	20	23.2

DEF. LEADERS

Tackles: T. Scott 78, J. Schoettmer 74, D. Lawrence 71
Tackles for loss: N. Jones 7.5, J. Schoettmer 6, E. Farmer 6, J. Rogers 6
Sacks: J. Rogers 5.5, N. Otis 4, E. Farmer 2.5, N. Jones 2.5
Interceptions: B. Walker 3, J. Schoettmer 2, M.J. Stewart 2

3 NEWCOMERS OF IMPACT

Jalen Dalton

The four-star recruit has length and size (6-6, 260 pounds) with plenty of upside. He enrolled early and will help a need area for the Tar Heels. One of the nation's most coveted defensive ends, Dalton could be a big-timer off the edge in the years to come.

Tommy Hatton

Legit, physical four-star center with toughness and an edge out of north Jersey. Hatton doesn't back down from anyone and has a high football IQ and power element. Comes in well-coached and plays with an intense passion.

Mason Veal

Well-coached offensive tackle with a high football IQ. Combines with Hatton and William Sweet to form North Carolina's best offensive line class in the modern era. Veal has the goods to be a productive blocker in the years to come in Chapel Hill.

SLEEPER

Ty'son Williams

Big back that's already impressed as an early enrollee. Has transitioned well from his wing back spot on the prep level to playing downhill in a spread scheme in college. Over 200 pounds and a burst that's opened some eyes. Will help compliment T.J. Logan and Elijah Hood in the years to come.

2016 NEEDS

North Carolina must continue to load up on defensive line talent as it rebuilds that side of the ball. The Heels will try to have the defensive line be the best part of the class, if possible. They will look to take a dual-threat QB with the ability to throw first, two receivers, a speed back and spend most of the class on upgrading the defensive talent across the board.

— Ryan Bartow

247SPORTS COMPOSITE

0	4	15	0
✪✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪	✪✪

Commitments	19
Average Stars	3.21
Total Stars	61
National Rank: 28	ACC: 4

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Jake Bargas	TE	6-4	225	✪✪✪	Boca Raton, FL	St Andrew's School

Ranked as the nation's No. 33 tight end and No. 115 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Honorable-mention 3A all-state selection…Had 47 receptions for 869 yards and eight touchdowns as a senior.

Corey Bell Jr.	CB	5-9	170	✪✪✪	Cornelius	William Amos Hough

Ranked as the nation's No. 116 cornerback and No. 44 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite…Recorded 23 tackles, six interceptions and five pass breakups as a senior.

J.K. Britt	ATH	5-11	187	✪✪✪	Newnan, GA	Newnan

Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 59 athlete and No. 76 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite…Recorded four interceptions and 22 tackles as a junior.

Aaron Crawford	DT	6-1	310	✪✪✪	Ashburn, VA	Stone Bridge

Ranked as the nation's No. 27 defensive tackle and No. 17 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite…Recorded 69 tackles and eight sacks as a junior.

Jalen Dalton	WDE	6-6	260	✪✪✪✪	Clemmons	West Forsyth

Enrolled in January…Under Armour All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 57 prospect overall, No. 3 weakside defensive end and No. 2 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite…Selected to the Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas.

Nathan Elliott	QB	6-1	195	✪✪✪	Celina, TX	Celina

Ranked as the nation's No. 28 dual-threat quarterback and No. 129 prospect in Texas according to the 247Sports Composite…Completed 171 of 264 passes for 2,624 yards, 44 touchdowns and 10 interceptions as a senior.

Tommy Hatton	OC	6-3	285	✪✪✪✪	Montvale, NJ	St. Joseph Regional

Under Armour All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 179 prospect overall, No. 4 center and No. 4 prospect in New Jersey according to the 247Sports Composite…Earned all-state honors.

Charlie Heck	OT	6-7	250	✪✪✪	Kansas City, MO	Rockhurst

Ranked as the nation's No. 97 offensive tackle and No. 14 prospect in Missouri according to the 247Sports Composite…Team captain as a senior…Brother of UNC offensive lineman Jon Heck.

Mike Hughes	CB	5-11	185	✪✪✪	New Bern	New Bern

Ranked as the nation's No. 40 cornerback and No. 12 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite…Selected to the Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas.

Juval Mollette	WR	6-4	205	✪✪✪	Randleman	Randleman

Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 54 wide receiver and No. 16 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite…Had 70 catches for 1,554 yards and 17 touchdowns as a senior…Selected to Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas.

Nick Polino	OG	6-4	275	✪✪✪	Buford, GA	Buford

Ranked as the nation's No. 43 offensive guard and No. 72 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite…Won team's most improved award.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Anthony Ratliff	QB	6-1	195	✪✪✪	Matthews	Butler

Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 400 prospect overall, No. 12 dual-threat quarterback and No. 11 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Passed for 1,783 yards and 25 touchdowns, while rushing for more than 1,200 yards and 16 touchdowns on 118 carries as a senior.

Andre Smith	ILB	6-0	235	✪✪✪	Jacksonville, FL	Trinity Christian Academy

Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 17 inside linebacker and No. 69 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Helped lead Trinity to back-to-back 3-A state championships in 2013 and 2014.

Jason Strowbridge	SDE	6-4	250	✪✪✪	Deerfield Beach, FL	Deerfield Beach

Ranked as the nation's No. 26 strongside defensive end and No. 66 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Had 12 sacks, two pass breakups and a fumble recovery as a junior.

Johnathan Sutton	OLB	5-11	220	✪✪✪	Swansea, SC	Swansea High

Ranked as the nation's No. 35 outside linebacker and No. 8 prospect in South Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite…Had 74 tackles, 21 tackles for loss and forced six fumbles as a sophomore.

William Sweet	OT	6-7	285	✪✪✪✪	Jacksonville, FL	First Coast

Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 238 prospect overall, No. 23 offensive tackle and No. 31 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Helped lead First Coast to a combined record of 56-5 during his high school career.

Carl Tucker	ATH	6-2	225	✪✪✪	Cornelius	William Amos Hough

Enrolled in January…Semper Fidelis All-American… Ranked as the nation's No. 48 athlete and No. 19 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite.

Mason Veal	OT	6-5	290	✪✪✪	Charlotte	Ardrey Kell

Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 45 offensive tackle and No. 13 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite…Selected to play in the Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas.

Ty'Son Williams	RB	6-0	220	✪✪✪✪	Sumter, SC	Crestwood

Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 281 prospect overall, No. 22 running back and No. 5 prospect in South Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite…Rushed for 1,058 yards and 14 touchdowns on 194 carries as a senior.

PLAYER PROFILE

Williams Undisputed Leader of UNC Offense

There was a time not too long ago when everything was uncertain for Marquise Williams, and when his future at North Carolina — and in college football — was in doubt.

During the spring of 2013 he wasn't enrolled at UNC or anywhere else while serving a suspension for academic reasons. Coach Larry Fedora wasn't sure if Williams would be back on campus, let alone in a place to one day lead the Tar Heels' up-tempo spread offense.

In a lot of ways, though, that low point was a turning point for Williams. Before that suspension, he was known as a talented but immature player who, by his own admission, rarely put in the work required to be successful.

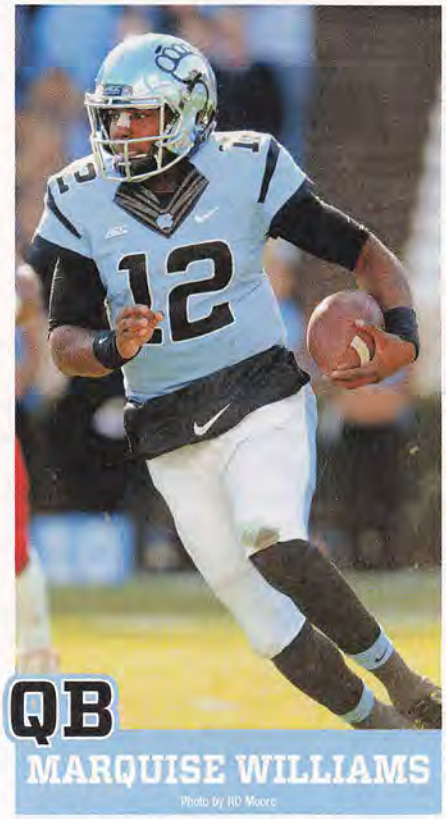
After that suspension, and after working his way back into school, Williams has been known as one of the most productive quarterbacks in the ACC. Now, for the first time since arriving at UNC, he'll enter the season as the undisputed leader of the offense.

"Marquise is our starting quarterback," Fedora said with confidence after the Tar Heels completed spring practice, "and I'm looking forward to watching those (other quarterbacks) compete in fall camp, but Marquise — I anticipate Marquise taking that first snap against South Carolina and getting after it."

The statement of affirmation might seem silly, given that Williams passed for 3,068 yards last season and ran for 788 more. Given those numbers, who else would enter the season as the starting quarterback?

Yet, Williams produced during the 2013 season, too, and still found himself a year ago looking over his shoulder, competing with Mitch Trubisky, then a redshirt freshman, for the starting job. Even after Williams secured the position in the preseason, he and Trubisky shared work at the start of the season.

It made for an uncomfortable — and unproductive — quarterback rotation, one that hampered the offense until Fedora and his staff ceased using it. Once he was given more control of the offense, Williams' confidence seemed to flourish.



Williams missed spring practice this year to recover from surgery to repair a torn hip labrum. The injury limited his effectiveness at times last season.

While he sat out in the spring, Williams tried to address the mental part of the game. Reading coverages. Picking up blitzes. Making quicker decisions, and better decisions, is among his priorities.

That he has a chance to do so is an accomplishment in itself. Two years ago his future was in doubt. He worked his way back, and now enters his final season believing his best is yet to come.

BEST AND BRIGHTEST

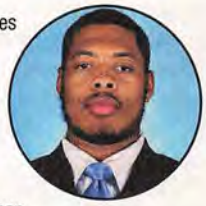
MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

QB MARQUISE WILLIAMS

Williams ranked second in the ACC last season in total offense — behind only Florida State's Jameis Winston — with an average of 296.6 yards per game. ... What he did last year is even more impressive given he played most of the season through a painful hip injury that required surgery in the offseason. ... His mobility was especially important given the shaky line play. ... If the line improves, he should be in position to become a more productive passer.

EMERGING STAR

DT NAZAIR JONES



There weren't a lot of positives for UNC's beleaguered defense a season ago, but Jones' emergence qualifies as one. ... A well-known prospect in high school, Jones showed glimpses of potential as a redshirt freshman, leading the team with 7.5 tackles for loss. ... He also broke up four passes, intercepted a pass and finished with 35 tackles. ... Jones has become considerably stronger and bigger since arriving on campus in 2013; he now weighs 300 pounds.

TOP NEWCOMER

DE JALEN DALTON

Dalton is the most heralded member of the Tar Heels' incoming class, and he plays a position where UNC struggled a season ago. ... Dalton enrolled early but ended the spring outside of the two-deep at defensive end. ... He'll likely need to become stronger to make a significant contribution, but given the lack of quality depth at defensive end he should have early opportunities to prove himself.

Photos courtesy of North Carolina Athletics.

Weiler, to his credit, is among the nation's best kickoff men and the Tar Heels' kickoff coverage ranked 10th nationally last season. UNC was also among the top 20 nationally in punt return coverage. If Switzer can rediscover his form, special teams could be among the Tar Heels' strengths.

SCHEDULE ANALYSIS

Six of UNC's first seven games are in North Carolina — five of those at Kenan Stadium. So the schedule sets up nicely for the Tar Heels to get off to a good start, especially if they beat what appears to be a non-vintage South Carolina team in Charlotte in the season-opener on Sept. 3.

It's only one game, but the significance of beating South Carolina couldn't be overstated. At worst, the Tar Heels — whose other non-conference games are against North Carolina A&T, Delaware and Illinois — should be 3-1 outside of the ACC.

The conference schedule is more manageable than it was last season since UNC plays Wake Forest instead of Clemson in its one non-rival divisional crossover game. But don't discount the difficulty of road games at Georgia Tech, Pittsburgh, Virginia Tech and NC State.

— Andrew Carter

NC STATE WOLFPACK

For more coverage of the Wolfpack, visit ncstate.247Sports.com

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Matt Canada **DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR:** Dave Huxtable **STADIUM:** Carter-Finley Stadium: 57,583

DOEREN BUILDING WINNING TRADITION WITH WOLFPACK

NC State coach Dave Doeren likes to use the new indoor practice facility next to Carter-Finley Stadium to illustrate a larger point about the program.

"You can't just talk about what you're going to do," Doeren said. "You have to show what you're building."

After a rocky debut, Doeren showed progress on the field last season, going 8-5 and winning five more games than in 2013. The Wolfpack coach is eager to continue the program's progress in his third season. With a veteran quarterback, a slew of talented running backs and seven starters back on defense, the Wolfpack has a chance to improve again in 2015.

The $14 million practice facility had long been discussed, going back at least four coaches at the school, but it was finally built under Doeren's watch. That's the type of results he wants on the field, too.

"Now you can show them, 'Here's how we prepared, and this is what the result was,'" Doeren said. "I think there's a lot of buy-in with what we're doing."

Senior quarterback Jacoby Brissett was the biggest difference between Doeren's first two teams. Brissett, a Florida transfer, cut down on the offense's turnovers and added leadership to the attack.

Even as the Wolfpack morphed into a power running team at the end of the season, rushing for more than 300 yards in consecutive ACC games for the first time since 1981, it was Brissett who made the offense work.

Doeren is counting on Brissett to take another step forward. He'll have help on offense, with an influx of new talent in the backfield, and with a veteran defense. After a 4-4 start last year, including an 0-4 mark in the ACC, NC State won four of its last five games.

Doeren was able to build off the momentum with a strong recruiting class, especially with in-state prospects. Running back Johnny Frasier, who flipped from Florida State, might be the best of the newcomers.

"This is a different team, because we lost some good seniors," Doeren said. "What we do have is bunch of guys back who played and are very confident and understand the process it took to finish the way that we did."

OFFENSE

Third-year coordinator Matt Canada will have no shortage of options.

Senior running back Shadrach Thornton led the team in rushing last season with 907 yards. Junior running back Matt Dayes is the team's top returning receiver (32 catches) and led the team in touchdowns (13).

They will be joined in the backfield by a wave of touted freshmen talent. Johnny Frasier, Nyheim Hines and Reggie Gallaspy II are all in-state products who will complement Thornton and Dayes. Sophomore Jaylen Samuels, who is almost a hybrid of running back and tight end, gives quarterback Jacoby Brissett a reliable receiving target.

"Our biggest issue is making sure everybody gets a touch," Canada said. "We have a variety of talents and we'll use them all."

Brissett was the catalyst of the offense, throwing for 2,606 passing yards and 23 touchdowns, with only five interceptions, last season. He also ran for 529 yards and three touchdowns.

Dayes, Hines and Samuels will be just as involved in the passing game as in the running game. Junior tight end David J. Grinnage (five touchdowns) gives Brissett a good red-zone target, as well. But as a group, the receivers have dropped too many passes in the past few seasons, and the top receiver from last season, Bo Hines (45 catches for 616 yards), transferred to Yale.

There are questions on the line, where both tackles need to be replaced. Redshirt freshman Tyler Jones has a leg up on true freshman Emanuel McGirt for the starting spot on the left side. Senior Alex Barr will probably start on the right side, with McGirt, one of the top in-state recruits, and junior college transfer Darius Workman as possible options as well.

The line was a strength last year, and could be again if Jones and Barr, who has 18 career starts at guard, can step in. The Wolfpack

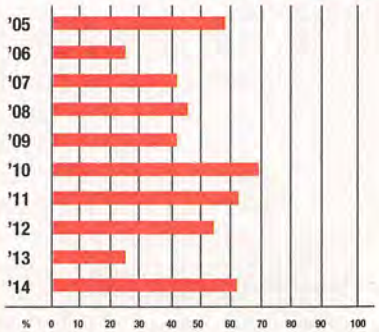
SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	'14 Record
Sept. 5	TROY	3-9
Sept. 12	EASTERN KENTUCKY	9-4
Sept. 19	at Old Dominion	6-6
Sept. 26	at South Alabama	6-7
Oct. 3	LOUISVILLE	9-4
Oct. 9	at Virginia Tech	7-6
Oct. 24	at Wake Forest	3-9
Oct. 31	CLEMSON	10-3
Nov. 7	at Boston College	7-6
Nov. 14	at Florida State	13-1
Nov. 21	SYRACUSE	3-9
Nov. 28	NORTH CAROLINA	6-7

RESULTS

8-5, 3-5		
W	GEORGIA SOUTHERN	24-23
W	OLD DOMINION	46-34
W	at South Florida	49-17
W	PRESBYTERIAN	42-0
L	FLORIDA STATE	41-56
L	at Clemson	0-41
L	BOSTON COLLEGE	14-30
L	at Louisville	18-30
W	at Syracuse	24-17
L	GEORGIA TECH	23-56
W	WAKE FOREST	42-13
W	at North Carolina	35-7
St. Petersburgh Bowl		
W	vs. UCF	34-27

10-YEAR WINNING TREND



AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:
Raleigh, N.C.

2014:
8-5 overall, 3-5 ACC (5th, Atlantic)

COACH:
Dave Doeren — At NC State: 11-14, 2 years; overall: 34-18, 4 years

RETURNING STARTERS:
14; 7 offense, 7 defense

PLAYERS TO WATCH:
QB Jacoby Brissett, RB Matt Dayes, RB Shadrach Thornton, RB Nyheim Hines, TE David J. Grinnage, DE Mike Rose, CB Jack Tocho, FS Hakim Jones

PRIMARY STRENGTHS:
Brissett is dangerous as a runner and passer. He will have plenty of help in the backfield, too. NC State has the makings of a dynamic and persistent rushing attack. All five starters return in the secondary, including Jones, the team's top tackler.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS:
There are two new tackles on the offensive line and there isn't much speed or playmaking ability at receiver. Three main pieces on the defensive front need to be replaced.

KEY LOSSES:
WR Bo Hines, LT Rob Crisp, RT Tyson Chandler, DT Thomas Teal, DT T.Y. McGill, LB Rodman Noel

OVERVIEW:
NC State hopes to build on the progress of last season, after improving from 3-9 to 8-5. The Wolfpack should be in good shape with Brissett back at quarterback and a deep running back rotation. In order for NC State to improve again, it has to figure out how to win on the road in the division, where it's just 3-23 since the ACC expanded in 2005.

KEY NUMBER:
204.5 NC State's highest rushing per game average since 1992 and almost 95 yards per game more than in the 2012 season before Doeren arrived.

FS
Hakim
JONES
Photo by Brian Tirpak

RB

SHADRACH THORNTON

Photo by Greg M. Cooper-USA TODAY Sports

SCOUTING REPORT: Offense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
QB	**Jacoby Brissett***	Sr.	Florida transfer was the key to the Pack's improvement.	Jalan McClendon, Fr.
RB	Matt Dayes	Jr.	Versatile scoring threat is also best pass-catcher on the team.	Shadrach Thornton, Sr.
WR	Nyheim Hines	Fr.	Team needs his speed in the slot to stretch defenses.	Gavin Locklear, So.
WR	Jumichael Ramos	Jr.	Big target needs to bounce back from disappointing season.	Maurice Morgan, Sr.
WR	**Bra'Lon Cherry***	Jr.	Athletic, downfield threat, but needs to be more consistent.	Johnathan Alston, Jr.
TE	**David J. Grinnage***	Jr.	Brissett's favorite red-zone target.	Benson Browne, Sr.
LT	Tyler Jones	Fr.	Redshirt needs to fill the big shoes of Rob Crisp.	Emanuel McGirt, Fr.
LG	**Joe Thuney***	Sr.	Potentially, NC State's first All-ACC lineman since 2003.	Bryce Kennedy, Jr.
C	**Quinton Schooley***	Sr.	Great JC find has started every game in past two years.	T.J. McCoy, Fr.
RG	**Tony Adams***	So.	Athletic blocker; started eight games as a true freshman.	Terrone Prescod, Fr.
RT	**Alex Barr***	Sr.	Veteran slides over from guard to the outside.	Darius Workman, Jr.
K	Kyle Bambard	Fr.	True freshman steps in for school's career leading scorer.	Jackson Maples, Fr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

SCOUTING REPORT: Defense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
DE	Bradley Chubb	So.	Converted linebacker bulked up and stood out in the spring.	Pharoah McKever, So.
DT	Kentavius Street	So.	The prize of last year's recruiting class moves inside.	Justin Jones, So.
DT	B.J. Hill	So.	Space-eater started five games as a true freshman.	Kenton Gibbs, So.
DE	**Mike Rose***	Sr.	Rangy end led the team with tackles for loss (15).	Darian Roseboro, Fr.
LB	**Jerod Fernandez***	So.	Improved as season progressed; impressive instincts.	M.J. Salahuddin, Jr.
LB	Airius Moore	So.	Undersized, but has a nose for the ball and creates pressure.	Ernie Robinson III, Jr.
CB	**Jack Tocho***	Jr.	Long arms, quick feet; easily the team's best cover corner.	Niles Clark, Jr.
CB	**Juston Burris***	Sr.	Big, physical CB; plays better with the ball in front of him.	Mike Stevens, So.
S	**Dravious Wright***	Jr.	Sure-tackler at the nickel position; quick in coverage.	Freddie Phillips Jr., Fr.
SS	**Josh Jones***	So.	Came on with a team-best four INTs after a slow start.	Shawn Boone, So.
FS	**Hakim Jones***	Sr.	Team's leading tackler and leader of the secondary.	Germaine Pratt, So.
P	A.J. Cole III	Fr.	Lanky freshman had a productive spring; impressed coaches.	William Stephenson, Jr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

posted its best rushing average (204.5 yards per game) last season since 1992.

DEFENSE

NC State's defense looks to build on a strong finish from last season that included more blitzing schemes and fewer yards and points allowed. The defense returns seven starters, including five in the secondary.

There's experience on the line, but coordinator Dave Huxtable will have to replace tackles Thomas Teal and T.Y. McGill, plus end Art Norman, who was the team's sack leader. Senior end Mike Rose has developed into a strong pass rusher and led the team in tackles for loss (15) last season.

Sophomore Kentavius Street moved inside to tackle in the spring and should be disruptive in the middle along with sophomore B.J. Hill. The depth on the line is a concern, but freshman end Darian Roseboro enrolled early and should be able to contribute. Junior end Pharoah McKever has the size and natural athletic ability to be disruptive off the edge. His 82-yard interception return for a touchdown at Syracuse turned the season around for the Wolfpack.

Linebacker was a weak spot last season after incumbent starter M.J. Salahuddin suffered torn ligaments in his left knee in August practice. Sophomores Jerod Fernandez and Airius Moore improved as the season progressed and will have to continue to improve. Salahuddin was held out of spring practice but is scheduled to be cleared for contact when training camp starts.

The secondary should be a strength. Senior safety Hakim Jones led the team in tackles (80), and sophomore safety Josh Jones came on at the end of the season with a team-best four interceptions.

Junior cornerback Jack Tocho is the team's best defender in coverage, and junior Dravious Wright emerged as a solid open-field tackler at the nickel position.

Getting pressure from the outside linebacker spot and Wright on blitzes was a proven formula by the end of the season. Half of the team's 30 sacks on the season came in the final four games.

With different parts up front, Huxtable will probably have to keep the pressure dialed up, but the secondary should be improved and the defense, as a whole, should take a step forward with another year of experience.

SPECIAL TEAMS

The last time NC State turned to a true freshman kicker, Niklas Sade ended up as the school's all-time leading scorer. This season, freshman Kyle Bambard will try to replace Sade, who last season eclipsed the school scoring mark of legendary running back Ted Brown.

Freshman Jackson Maples will push Bambard, a versatile high school athlete, in camp for the starting job.

NOTEBOOK

The eight-win season of 2014 ended up being rewarding for coach **Dave Doeren**.

North Carolina State announced in February that it had agreed to extend Doeren's contract two years, through the 2019 season, and raised his annual guaranteed salary from $1.8 million to about $2.2 million.

In making the announcement, athletic director **Debbie Yow** said Doeren had "the vision and commitment to elevate our program."

• Doeren produced eight victories last season without having a player who was selected in the 2015 NFL Draft. The Wolfpack has had just one player drafted — fourth-round cornerback **Dontae Johnson** by the 49ers — in the past two years. You have to go back to 2006 to find NC State's last first-round pick, which was No. 1 overall selection **Mario Williams**.

• Jones is a common surname, but NC State seems to have more than its share of the Joneses. There are four players with the last name of Jones on the roster, and three are slated to be starters — free safety **Hakim Jones**, strong safety **Josh Jones** and left tackle **Tyler Jones**. The other is defensive tackle **Justin Jones**.

Hakim and Josh are proven commodities and key players. Tyler, a redshirt freshman, is expected to step into a key starting spot on the line.

"Tyler Jones at left tackle had a great spring and got a lot better for us," Doeren said.

• Doeren identified special teams as "probably the biggest question mark going into the fall," given new starters at kicker and punter. "We lost such veteran players there, two four-year starters," Doeren said. "So the kids here competed hard this spring and I was impressed with them, but it's going to be about game day for that position."

• There were three quarterbacks at Power 5 conference programs last season who compiled 2,000 passing yards, 300 rushing yards, 20 passing touchdowns and five or fewer interceptions. Heisman winner **Marcus Mariota** was one. UCLA's **Brett Hundley** was another. And the other guy was NC State's **Jacoby Brissett**.

"He played his butt off as a junior," Doeren said of Brissett. "Excited for him."

WOLFPACK SPRING ROSTER

Quarterbacks	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
19 Evan Brabrand	QB	6-2	197	Fr.	Raleigh
12 Jacoby Brissett	QB	6-4	235	Sr.	West Palm Beach, FL
14 Woody Cornwell	QB	6-2	206	Fr.	Lake Junaluska
2 Jalan McClendon	QB	6-5	208	Fr.	Charlotte
5 Josh Taylor	QB	5-11	189	Jr.	New Bern
Running Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
20 Brady Bodine	RB	5-10	200	Fr.	Conway Springs, KS
21 Matt Dayes	RB	5-9	203	Jr.	Weston, FL
25 Reggie Gallaspy II	RB	5-11	209	Fr.	High Point
27 Dakwa Nichols	RB	5-9	192	So.	Rockingham
10 Shadrach Thornton	RB	6-1	205	Sr.	Hinesville, GA
36 Max Stoffer	FB	6-1	234	Fr.	Nashville, TN
Wide Receivers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
15 Johnathan Alston	WR	6-0	203	Jr.	Bunn
13 Bra'Lon Cherry	WR	5-11	188	Jr.	New Bern
80 Elliott Davis	WR	6-1	185	Fr.	Gaithersburg, MD
36 Jacob Davis	WR	6-0	195	Jr.	Farmville
13 Jordan Dawson	WR	6-0	192	So.	Cary
34 Ben Grazen	WR	5-9	185	So.	Cary
30 Gavin Locklear	WR	5-10	186	So.	Apex
88 Stephen Louis	WR	6-2	201	So.	West Palm Beach, FL
19 Maurice Morgan	WR	6-3	250	Sr.	LaGrange
32 Stephen Morrison	WR	5-11	196	Fr.	Weddington
3 Jumichael Ramos	WR	6-2	200	Jr.	Lovejoy, GA
37 Josh Sessoms	WR	6-2	202	Jr.	Wilson
87 Maurice Trowell	WR	5-11	191	Fr.	Durham
Tight Ends	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
89 Benson Browne	TE	6-6	264	Sr.	Cincinnati, OH
48 Cole Cook	TE	6-6	247	So.	Carrollton, GA
86 David J. Grinnage	TE	6-5	274	Jr.	Newark, DE
28 Jaylen Samuels	TE	5-11	236	So.	Charlotte
42 Micah Till	TE	6-5	274	Fr.	Upper Marlboro, MD
Offensive Linemen	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
67 Evan Pritt	OL	6-3	266	So.	Wilmington
57 Peter Daniel	OT	6-6	284	So.	Raleigh
53 Tyler Jones	OT	6-3	290	Fr.	Stone Mountain, GA
68 Zak Kuder	OT	6-7	276	Fr.	Asheville
64 Tylar Reagan	OT	6-5	287	So.	Jacksonville, FL
66 Will Richardson	OT	6-6	315	Fr.	Burlington
71 Alex Barr	OG	6-8	326	Sr.	Fayetteville, GA
56 Bryce Kennedy	OG	6-3	307	Jr.	Southern Pines
70 Terronne Prescod	OG	6-5	338	Fr.	Decatur, GA
54 Joe Thuney	OG	6-5	288	Sr.	Centerville, OH
50 Tony Adams	C	6-2	318	So.	Charlotte
61 T.J. McCoy	C	6-1	314	Fr.	Groveland, FL
60 Quinton Schooley	C	6-4	308	Sr.	Chanute, KS
59 John Tu'uta	C	6-3	273	Jr.	Fredericksburg, VA
Defensive Linemen	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
73 Grant Bowman	DT	6-1	270	So.	Wilmington
91 Garrett Bradbury	DT	6-3	280	Fr.	Charlotte
43 Coult Culler	DT	6-5	266	Fr.	Wilmington
96 Kenton Gibbs	DT	6-2	296	So.	Detriot, MI
98 B.J. Hill	DT	6-4	294	So.	Oakboro
93 Justin Jones	DT	6-2	289	So.	Austell, GA
97 Deshaywn Middleton	DT	6-2	313	Fr.	Winston-Salem
94 Monty Nelson	DT	6-2	312	Jr.	Plantation, FL
79 Ben Pierce	DT	5-10	258	Jr.	Purlear
35 Kentavius Street	DT	6-2	278	So.	Greenville
54 Davion Allred	DE	6-0	219	So.	Raleigh
75 Hampton Billips	DE	6-7	242	Fr.	Greensboro
49 Bradley Chubb	DE	6-4	257	So.	Powder Springs, GA
67 Clark Eyers	DE	6-5	252	Sr.	Dunn
55 Deonte Holden	DE	6-4	227	Fr.	Hyattsville, MD
33 Ty Linton	DE	6-2	254	So.	Weddington
87 Pharoah McKever	DE	6-6	256	So.	Tabor City
90 Mike Rose	DE	6-3	277	Sr.	Fountain Inn, SC
45 Darian Roseboro	DE	6-4	280	Fr.	Lincolnton
Linebackers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
4 Jerod Fernandez	LB	6-0	231	So.	Lake Mary, FL
44 Ford Howell	LB	6-1	236	So.	Memphis, TN
58 Airius Moore	LB	6-0	232	So.	Beavercreek, OH
32 Riley Nicholson	LB	6-0	220	Fr.	Kissimmee, FL
50 Artemis Robinson	LB	6-0	225	So.	Laurinburg
46 Ernie Robinson III	LB	6-1	229	Jr.	Laurinburg
42 M.J. Salahuddin	LB	6-2	233	Jr.	Fayetteville
48 Bryan Smith	LB	6-2	244	So.	Oxford
26 Trace Batten	NIC	5-10	202	Fr.	Palm Beach Gardens, FL
10 Freddie Phillips, Jr.	NIC	6-1	192	Fr.	Pelion, SC
39 James Smith-Williams	NIC	6-4	217	Fr.	Raleigh
28 Robert Willcox	NIC	6-0	188	Fr.	Greensboro
8 Dravious Wright	NIC	5-10	205	Jr.	Vero Beach, FL
Defensive Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
11 Juston Burris	CB	6-1	207	Sr.	Raleigh
25 Niles Clark	CB	5-11	186	Jr.	Marietta, GA
12 Nicholas Lacy	CB	5-7	185	So.	Pinehurst
14 Malcolm Means	CB	6-1	205	So.	Great Falls, SC
19 Sean Paul	CB	5-11	186	So.	Vero Beach, FL
30 Mike Stevens	CB	5-11	190	So.	Davidson
29 Jack Tocho	CB	6-0	198	Jr.	Charlotte
33 Charlie Twitty	CB	5-10	187	Jr.	Raleigh
22 Troy Vincent, Jr.	CB	5-10	199	So.	Baltimore, MD
24 Shawn Boone	S	5-10	194	So.	Palm Beach Gardens, FL
41 Cole Boroughs	S	6-0	190	Jr.	Asheboro
20 Hakim Jones	S	6-2	200	Sr.	Henderson
2 Josh Jones	S	6-2	215	So.	Walled Lake, MI
27 Kalen McCain	S	6-2	190	Fr.	Durham
31 Germaine Pratt	S	6-3	229	So.	High Point
34 Dexter Wright	S	6-2	223	Fr.	Wilson
Specialists	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
92 Kyle Bambard	PK	5-8	188	Fr.	Walled Lake, MI
37 Jackson Maples	PK	5-10	191	Fr.	Southern Pines
90 A.J. Cole III	P	6-4	230	Fr.	College Park, GA
47 William Stephenson	P	6-3	195	Jr.	Raleigh
62 R.C. Brunstetter	LS	6-3	227	Fr.	Mocksville
52 Ben Garnett	LS	6-0	236	Jr.	Charlotte
96 Duncan Musselwhite	LS	6-3	214	Fr.	New Bern

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	30.2	55
Rushing	204.5	37
Passing	204.0	82
Total	408.5	57

DEFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	27.0	65
Rushing	168.4	65
Passing	204.7	30
Total	373.1	46

TO MARGIN	PER GAME	RANK
+5	+ 0.38	T-37

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	GP	Effic	Cmp	Att	Int	Pct	Yards	TD	Long	Avg/G
J. Brissett	13	136.7	221	370	5	59.7	2606	23	65	200.5
G. Leatham	3	-5.5	1	6	1	16.7	8	0	8	2.7

RECEIVING

NAME	GP	No.	Yards	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
B. Hines	13	45	616	13.7	1	54	47.4
M. Dayes	13	32	321	10.0	5	39	24.7
D. Grinnage	13	27	358	13.3	5	45	27.5

RUSHING

NAME	GP	Att.	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
S. Thornton	13	164	933	26	907	5.5	9	58	69.8
M. Dayes	13	104	596	23	573	5.5	8	68	44.1
J. Brissett	13	124	763	234	529	4.3	3	60	40.7

DEF. LEADERS

Tackles: H. Jones 80, J. Fernandez 78, R. Noel 76
Tackles for loss: M. Rose 15, R. Noel 12, A. Norman 9
Sacks: A. Norman 6.5, M. Rose 5, three tied with 3
Interceptions: J. Jones 4, J. Fernandez 2, four tied with 1

247SPORTS WOLFPACK RECRUITING 2015

3 NEWCOMERS OF IMPACT

Darian Roseboro

Rugged, powerful defensive end with versatility. A legit, productive four-star prospect that can be a force against the run and provide a push in the pass game. One of the top defensive ends in the nation that chose to stay home.

Johnny Frasier

One of the nation's top backs, originally out of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., didn't go far from his adopted hometown of Princeton, N.C., to nearby Raleigh. He has a rare combination of size (5-10, 229) and speed (sub 4.5). Should play right away and provide a big-time element to the Wolfpack's attack.

Nyheim Hines

High character, hard-working all-purpose back that can help in the return game, catching passes and running the rock. Hines was ultra-productive — just like Frasier — on the prep level. He grew up liking the Wolfpack and has a chance to be the ambassador for the program going forward.

SLEEPER

Emanuel McGirt

Huge four-star upside for the bookend left tackle that plays with an edge. Super frame and work ethic with a cerebral approach. McGirt has the chance to develop into NC State's future franchise tackle and has the goods to be an all-league type performer.

2016 NEEDS

For the first time ever, the Wolfpack signed four of the top seven recruits in North Carolina. They'll need to continue to keep the state's best close to home. Positions of need include quarterback, a handful of receivers, interior linemen on both side of the ball and at least three defensive backs.

— Ryan Bartow

247SPORTS COMPOSITE

0	4	18	1
✪✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪	✪✪

Commitments	23
Average Stars	3.13
Total Stars	72
National Rank: 30	ACC: 6

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Eurndraus Bryant	DT	6-2	320	✪✪✪	North Charleston, SC	Fort Dorchester

Ranked as the nation's No. 86 defensive tackle and No. 24 prospect in South Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Finished his senior campaign with 65 tackles, including 20 tackles for loss, and six sacks.

Malik Douglas	WDE	6-4	220	✪✪✪	Southport	South Brunswick

Ranked as the nation's No. 34 weakside defensive end and No. 25 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite…Had 71 tackles, 16 sacks, three pass breakups and five forced fumbles as a junior.

Johnny Frasier	RB	5-10	229	✪✪✪✪	Princeton	Princeton

U.S. Army All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 75 prospect overall, No. 7 running back and No. 3 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Finished with 9,240 career all-purpose yards and 109 career touchdowns.

Reggie Gallaspy	RB	5-11	205	✪✪✪	Greensboro	Southern Guilford

Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 39 running back and No. 15 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Led the state in rushing as a senior with 349 carries for 3,318 yards and 52 touchdowns.

Vernon Grier	WR	5-11	175	✪✪✪	Charlotte	Mallard Creek

Ranked as the nation's No. 206 wide receiver and No. 56 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 64 receptions for 1,158 yards and 16 touchdowns as a senior.

Tyler Griffiths	LS	6-2	220	✪✪	Monroe	Sun Valley

Ranked as the nation's No. 9 long snapper and No. 83 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 39 tackles and two sacks as a senior ... Named first-team all-conference.

Nyheim Hines	APB	5-9	187	✪✪✪✪	Garner	Garner

Semper Fidelis All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 112 prospect overall, No. 2 all-purpose back and No. 6 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Ended his high school career with 6,242 rushing yards, 7,299 total yards and 126 touchdowns, all school records.

Quentez Johnson	DT	6-3	315	✪✪✪	Ellenwood, GA	Cedar Grove

Ranked as the nation's No. 62 wide receiver and No. 99 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded 45 tackles, including 10 for loss and 6.5 sacks as a senior.

T.J. McCoy	OC	6-2	305	✪✪✪	Groveland, FL	South Lake

Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 20 center and No. 225 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Played in the Central Florida All-Star Game ... Son of former Florida Gators and NFL defensive tackle Tony McCoy.

Emanuel McGirt	OT	6-6	275	✪✪✪✪	Durham	Hillside

Ranked as the nation's No. 216 prospect overall, No. 19 offensive tackle and No. 7 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Named to the AP all-state team.

Jakobi Meyers	QB	6-1	172	✪✪✪	Lithonia, GA	Arabia Mountain

Ranked as the nation's No. 54 dual-threat quarterback and No. 190 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Completed 110 of 170 passes (64.7 percent) for 1,834 yards and 23 touchdowns as a senior.

Jarius Morehead	S	6-0	185	✪✪✪	Gibsonville	Eastern Guilford

Ranked as the nation's No. 82 safety and No. 40 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 102 tackles, two interceptions and six sacks as a senior ... Earned all-conference and all-region honors.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Riley Nicholson	OLB	6-0	220	✪✪✪	Kissimmee, FL	Osceola

Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 57 outside linebacker and No. 132 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded 132 tackles, including 70 solo stops, and forced five fumbles as a senior.

Emmanuel Olenga	SDE	6-4	240	✪✪✪	Charlotte	Renaissance Olympic

Ranked as the nation's No. 50 strongside defensive end and No. 32 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded 105 total tackles, including 16.5 quarterback sacks, and forced five fumbles as a senior.

Freddie Phillips	S	6-2	195	✪✪✪	Pelion, SC	Pelion

Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 85 safety and No. 16 prospect in South Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Had over 500 yards receiving and 48 tackles as a junior ... Also played basketball and ran track.

Tyrone Riley	WDE	6-6	230	✪✪✪	Savannah, GA	Calvary Day School

Ranked as the nation's No. 37 weakside defensive end and No. 81 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite.. Had 85 tackles, including six for loss as a junior.

Darian Roseboro	SDE	6-4	285	✪✪✪✪	Lincolnton	Lincolnton

Enrolled in January… Semper Fidelis All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 111 prospect overall, No. 9 strongside defensive end and No. 5 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 125 tackles, 18 tackles for loss and 10 sacks as a senior ... Rushed for 1,459 yards and 34 TDs ... Named to the AP all-state team.

Brian Sessoms	WR	5-8	170	✪✪✪	Winston Salem	Carver

Ranked as the nation's No. 177 wide receiver and No. 51 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Caught 55 passes for 1,075 yards and 12 TDs as a senior ... Named all-conference as both a junior and senior.

Freddie Simmons	WR	6-3	175	✪✪✪	Bethlehem, PA	Bethlehem Catholic

Ranked as the nation's No. 104 wide receiver and No. 17 prospect in Pennsylvania according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 49 catches for 707 yards and 13 touchdowns as a senior.

James Smith-Williams	OLB	6-4	210	✪✪✪	Raleigh	Millbrook

Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 96 outside linebacker and No. 47 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded 146 tackles, 19 sacks and 36 tackles for loss as a senior.

Philip Walton	OT	6-7	260	✪✪✪	Charlotte	Charlotte Christian

Ranked as the nation's No. 164 offensive tackle and No. 53 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Named All-*Charlotte Observer* second-team.

Aaron Wiltz	OG	6-5	280	✪✪✪	Baton Rouge, LA	Catholic

Ranked as the nation's No. 99 offensive guard and No. 75 prospect in Louisiana according to the 247Sports Composite… Named all-district, all-metro and all-state honorable mention as a senior.

Daris Workman	OT	6-6	265	✪✪✪	San Pablo, CA	Contra Costa College

Ranked as the nation's No. 128 junior college prospect according to the 247Sports Composite… Earned All-American and all-conference honors.

PLAYER PROFILE

Brissett to Lead NC State with Arms, Legs

There's no set formula for how much NC State coach Dave Doeren wants quarterback Jacoby Brissett to run.

But it was clear by the end of last season, the Wolfpack's offense was at its best when Brissett was using his legs. In the final four games, Brissett ran 43 times for 325 yards and two touchdowns. That's compared to 81 attempts for 204 yards and one touchdown in the first nine games.

"He likes to run, so he's going to run," Doeren said. "It's just a matter of how we can protect him and use him best."

Doeren had success at Northern Illinois with mobile quarterbacks, and Brissett continued that trend last season. His best game came in the Wolfpack's biggest win, a 35-7 upset of North Carolina in the regular-season finale. He had a career-best 167 rushing yards on 14 carries with one touchdown.

In the early part of the season, offensive coordinator Matt Canada didn't use Brissett as much in the running game because he didn't want to risk injury.

"You have to be smart when you run your quarterback," Canada said.

Brissett doesn't necessarily have a preference for how the offense gets its yards. He completed 59.7 percent of his passes last season for 2,606 yards. He had 23 touchdown passes with only five interceptions.

"If running helps us win, that's what I'll do," Brissett said.

Brissett said he's more comfortable in the offense after a year in Canada's system. After two years as a backup at Florida and one year sitting out at NC State, Brissett hadn't been a regular starter since high school.

With a year of game experience under his belt, and another spring practice, Brissett said he has a better grasp on what he's supposed to do.

Photo by Brian Tirpak

"I'm seeing things a lot faster," Brissett said. "The game is really slowing down and I'm taking the next step in understanding the offense."

Doeren said there were times in 2014 when Brissett tried to do too much, tried "to win every game on every play." But Doeren is excited about the prospect of Brissett's progress. And the quarterback is excited about his senior season.

"We're going to have a special offense," Brissett said. "We have a lot of different weapons and everyone wants the ball. What everyone needs to understand is if we win, that's all that really matters."

BEST AND BRIGHTEST

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

RB MATT DAYES

Versatile 5-9, 203-pound junior with the best hands on the team. ... Led the Wolfpack in touchdowns with 13 (eight rushing, five receiving). ... Scored five touchdowns in the last three games, including two in the St. Petersburg Bowl win over Central Florida. ... Top returning pass-catcher on the team with 32 catches for 321 yards. ... Was the only player in the ACC with more than 300 yards rushing, 300 receiving and 300 return yards.

EMERGING STAR

TE DAVID J. GRINNAGE

The big (6-5, 274), over-the-middle target was one of the most improved players on the team last year. ... Had a career-best four catches for 87 yards in a 56-41 loss to Florida State. ... He caught five touchdown passes in a five-game ACC span, including two in a loss to Louisville. ... Improved his receiving totals from 15 in 2013 to 27 in 2014. ... Missed the spring with a back injury, but is expected to be full strength by fall.

TOP NEWCOMER

RB JOHNNY FRASIER

He originally committed to Florida State, but switched to stay in-state. ... Frasier rushed for 2,266 yards as a senior at Princeton High School and amassed 7,100 yards and 99 touchdowns in his prep career. ... Rated No. 75 nationally, and the seventh-best running back, by the 247Sports Composite. ... Strong, powerful runner has been compared to former Georgia star Todd Gurley, who is also from eastern North Carolina.

Photos courtesy of NC State Athletics.

Freshman A.J. Cole had a strong spring punting and, at 6-4, 230 pounds, is built like Wil Baumann, who had his best college season in 2014.

The return units figure to get a boost from running back Nyheim Hines, the freshman from Garner, N.C., especially in the punt game. Redshirt freshman Maurice Trowell, a speedy receiver, can give Matt Dayes a rest on kickoff returns, if Doeren wants to keep Dayes fresh for the offense.

SCHEDULE ANALYSIS

NC State has a chance to go unbeaten outside the ACC again, while improving inside the league. The Wolfpack has four winnable games to start the season in what has to be one of the easiest non-conference schedules for a Power 5 conference team.

Within the ACC, the Wolfpack catches a break in the sense that it won't have to play Florida State and Clemson in consecutive weeks, like it did last year. The opening stretch of the league is difficult, though — Louisville, at Virginia Tech and Clemson — in the first four weeks.

Overall, it shouldn't be hard for NC State, at the very least, to match last season's 3-5 record in league play. But to get there, the Wolfpack likely will have to win at Wake Forest for the first time since 2001 and beat Boston College, which it has never done in ACC play.

— Joe Giglio

PITTSBURGH PITT PANTHERS

For more coverage of the Panthers, visit pittsburgh.247Sports.com

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Jim Chaney **DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR:** Josh Conklin **STADIUM:** Heinz Field: 65,050

OFFENSE TO CARRY PANTHERS WHILE DEFENSE PROGRESSES

Pitt doesn't actually change head football coaches every season, it only seems that way.

Heck, the Panthers got three whole seasons out of their last coach, Paul Chryst, which, considering the recent history of the program, makes him almost a lifer.

But Chryst left for his dream job at Wisconsin, so that meant another offseason of transition for the Panthers, who have had eight different head coaches (counting interims) since the start of the 2010 season. This coaching change, however, also led to the ouster of longtime athletic director Steve Pederson, as his recent luck in hiring football coaches had not been good.

The combination of the firing of Pederson, who had become increasingly unpopular as the football program became mired in mediocrity, and the hiring of coach Pat Narduzzi has seemingly energized the fan base in every tangible way.

That's because Narduzzi, who was formerly the defensive coordinator at Michigan State, has taken the town by storm with an aggressive approach to his job. It certainly helps that Narduzzi is from right up the road in Youngstown, Ohio, and possesses many of the same blue-collar values of the people in Western Pennsylvania, but it goes beyond that. He has a keen understanding of how to use social media and traditional media to keep fans engaged.

A great example of this is the "Pat signal" that Narduzzi puts out on Twitter every time a player commits to the Panthers. He also has his assistant coaches tweeting out maps and pictures of places they are recruiting, and they have used hashtags like #TeamNoSleep to describe their nonstop efforts to find players across the country.

This approach has been in stark contrast to the notoriously understated Chryst.

But it should be noted that Chryst did well to rebuild the talent base, so the cupboard isn't bare for the new staff, which now needs to put on the finishing touches.

OFFENSE

One of Narduzzi's first and most important decisions was to hire offensive coordinator Jim Chaney from Arkansas, mostly because he liked Chaney's reputation as an aggressive play-caller and master of developing quarterbacks.

Junior quarterback Chad Voytik looks to build on a solid first season as the starter, when he completed 176 of 287 passes for 2,233 yards, with 16 touchdown passes and seven interceptions.

Voytik, who is a dual-threat quarterback with roots in a spread offense, struggled early last season until Paul Chyrst tailored the offense more to his talents and utilized more quarterback runs and read-option plays.

The result was easy to see. The offense scored 30 or more points in each of the last five games.

If Voytik is good, the Panthers could have one of their best offenses in a long time because there are plenty of guys around him to make plays and score touchdowns.

Chaney, shortly after he was hired, was asked what he expected the offense to look like. He fired off this great one-liner:

"I'm not sure entirely, but I figure we will throw it to the tall, skinny kid and hand it off a bunch to that big son of a gun in the backfield," he said with a laugh.

The tall skinny kid, junior Tyler Boyd, is one of the best receivers in the nation. The big son of a gun in the backfield is the reigning ACC Player of the Year, 250-pound junior tailback James Conner.

Boyd, who was a second-team All-American, had 78 receptions for 1,261 yards and eight touchdowns last season. Conner rushed 298 times for 1,765 yards and 26 touchdowns and broke a number of legendary running back Tony Dorsett's school records.

Those two will get most of the attention, but the Panthers are much deeper than that in terms of playmakers. Tight ends J.P. Holtz (21 catches last season) and Scott Orndoff, and receiver Dontez Ford, are good complementary players.

The line must replace tackle T.J. Clemmings, who was selected in the fourth round of the NFL Draft, but it has three returning starters and plenty of depth, as this

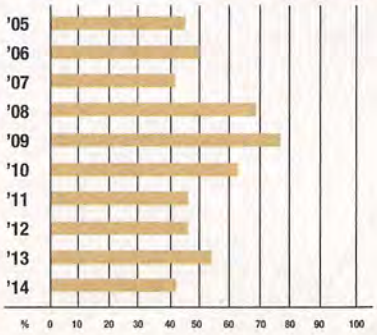
SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	'14 Record
Sept. 5	YOUNGSTOWN STATE	7-5
Sept. 12	at Akron	5-7
Sept. 19	at Iowa	7-6
Oct. 3	at Virginia Tech	7-6
Oct. 10	VIRGINIA	5-7
Oct. 17	at Georgia Tech	11-3
Oct. 24	at Syracuse	3-9
Oct. 29	NORTH CAROLINA	6-7
Nov. 7	NOTRE DAME	8-5
Nov. 14	at Duke	9-4
Nov. 21	LOUISVILLE	9-4
Nov. 27	MIAMI	6-7

RESULTS

6-7, 4-4		
W	DELAWARE	62-0
W	at Boston College	30-20
W	at FIU	42-25
L	IOWA	20-24
L	AKRON	10-21
L	at Virginia	19-24
W	VIRGINIA TECH	21-16
L	GEORGIA TECH	28-56
L	DUKE (2OT)	48-51
L	at North Carolina	35-40
W	SYRACUSE	30-7
W	at Miami	35-23
	Armed Forces Bowl	
L	vs. Houston	34-35

10-YEAR WINNING TREND



AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:
Pittsburgh, Pa.

2014:
6-7 overall, 4-4 ACC (T-3rd, Coastal)

COACH:
Pat Narduzzi — At Pitt and overall, 1st year

RETURNING STARTERS:
16; 8 offense, 6 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH:
QB Chad Voytik, RB James Conner, WR Tyler Boyd, OT Adam Bisnowaty, TE J.P. Holtz, NT Khaynin Mosley-Smith, MLB Matt Galambos, CB Lafayette Pitts

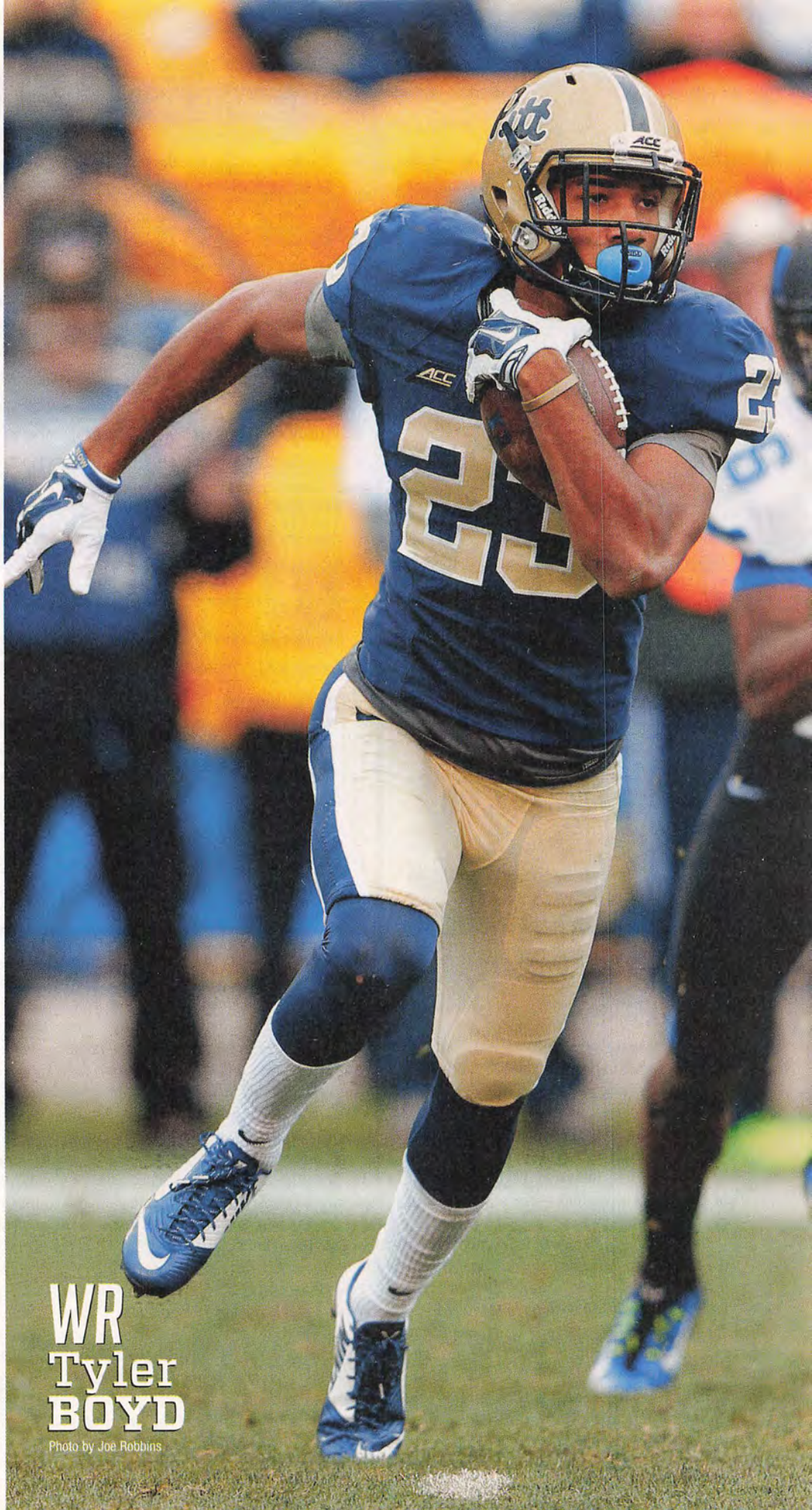
PRIMARY STRENGTHS:
Pitt should not have many issues scoring points with explosive playmakers on the outside and one of the best tailbacks in the country. The offensive line is experienced, and Voytik developed as a passer late last season.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS:
The Panthers' defense was not good last year. While the arrival of Narduzzi should help a great deal, there is still not much depth and speed. He'll need time to make Pitt's defense anything like he had at Michigan State.

KEY LOSSES:
WR Manasseh Garner, OT T.J. Clemmings, LB Todd Thomas, LB Anthony Gonzalez, S Ray Vinopal

OVERVIEW:
The arrival of Narduzzi has created plenty of buzz, but the Panthers are probably still a couple of recruiting classes away from being a legitimate contender for the ACC title. However, the offense should be explosive enough for Pitt to be an intriguing team to watch. Certainly, a winning record and an eighth consecutive trip to a bowl game should be expected, but anything more is a bonus.

KEY NUMBER:
249.5 Pitt ranked 15th in the NCAA and third in the ACC in rushing yards per game. It was the Panthers' best rushing output since 1988.



WR
Tyler
BOYD

Photo by Joe Robbins

QB

CHAD VOYTIK

Photo by Joe Robbins

SCOUTING REPORT: Offense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
QB	**Chad Voytik***	Jr.	Dual threat QB who has improved dramatically as passer.	Nathan Peterman, Jr.
RB	**James Conner***	Jr.	The returning ACC Offensive Player of the Year.	Chris James, So.
FB	**Jaymar Parrish***	Jr.	Excellent lead blocker and tough runner.	Colton Lively, So.
WR	**Tyler Boyd***	Jr.	A dynamic, big-play receiver and future first-round pick.	Zach Challingsworth, So.
WR	Dontez Ford	Jr.	Has developed into a consistent threat and playmaker.	Jester Weah, So.
TE	**J.P. Holtz***	Sr.	An excellent blocker with surprising athleticism and good hands.	Scott Orndoff, Jr.
LT	**Adam Bisnowaty***	Jr.	Two-year starter is the anchor and leader of this unit.	John Guy, Jr.
LG	**Dorian Johnson***	Jr.	Big and athletic; has a chance to become dominant.	Carson Baker, So.
C	Artie Rowell	Sr.	One of the Panthers' most experienced and gritty lineman.	**Alex Officer, So.***
RG	Alex Bookser	Fr.	A homegrown talent, he will be a fixture over next four years.	Mike Herndon, Fr.
RT	Jaryd Jones-Smith	So.	Developed consistency in spring and is poised for big year.	Aaron Reese, So.
PK	**Chris Blewitt***	Jr.	A reliable kicker who made 16 of 21 FGs last season.	Joel Reighard, Fr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

SCOUTING REPORT: Defense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
DE	Rori Blair	So.	Tall, athletic pass rusher blossomed late last season.	Reggie Green, So.
DT	**Darryl Render***	Sr.	Strong, steady and one of unit's most experienced players.	Jeremiah Taleni, So.
NT	**Khaynin Mosley-Smith***	Sr.	Explosive, agile and quick. Excellent run stopper.	Tyrique Jarrett, Jr.
DE	Ejuan Price	Sr.	When healthy, he is one of Pitt's most productive defenders.	**Shakir Soto, Jr.***
LB	Nicholas Grigsby	Sr.	A standout in pass coverage and run support.	Jameel Poteat, Sr.
LB	**Matt Galambos***	Jr.	Steady, smart player and excellent tackler.	Quintin Wirginis, So.
LB	Bam Bradley	Jr.	As his first name suggests, a physical player and big hitter.	Mike Caprara, Jr.
CB	Avonte Maddox	So.	A physical corner who has excellent speed and strength.	Ryan Lewis, Jr.
CB	**Lafayette Pitts***	Sr.	Brings great size and physicality to the position.	Dennis Briggs, Fr.
SS	Pat Amara	So.	Good athlete with great technique and above-average speed.	Jevonte Pitts, Jr.
FS	**Reggie Mitchell***	Jr.	Extremely smart player, always in place to make plays.	Terrish Webb, Jr.
P	**Ryan Winslow***	So.	Averaged 40.1 yards per punt, but needs more consistency.	Nick Goldsmith, Fr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

was a unit that Chryst did a great job of rebuilding.

DEFENSE

Narduzzi's introduction to Pitt football was his visit to the Armed Forces Bowl in January. He watched the Panthers give up 29 fourth-quarter points while the team blew a 34-13 lead in a 35-34 loss to Houston.

It was an all too familiar performance by the Panthers defense, highlighting all of the issues they had — from scheme to depth to experience.

But Narduzzi is known as having one of the brightest defensive minds in college football, and he hired one of his proteges, Florida International defensive coordinator Josh Conklin, to run the defense. That combination should produce an improvement.

It could take some time, though, for Narduzzi's touch to truly be noticed because the Panthers still need more players on that side of the ball, particularly along the line and at linebacker.

Narduzzi's style is the complete opposite of the Panthers' defensive philosophy under Matt House. Narduzzi and Conklin will use multiple fronts and looks to disguise blitzes. They will ask the corners to play a lot more press coverage, and safeties to be more physical at the point of attack.

"It is simpler, but we are being asked to be more aggressive, more physical at all three levels," said safety Jevonte Pitts, who is one of the team's hardest hitters. "But it allows us to play faster."

Pitt does have 21 letterman and six starters returning on defense, but this was a unit that gave up 26.3 points per game last season. The Panthers allowed 35 points or more in four of their final six games.

The strength should be the secondary, especially in Narduzzi's scheme. Corners Lafayette Pitts and Avonte Maddox are physical players. Safety Reggie Mitchell is athletic and heady. And safeties Terrish Webb and Pat Amara are big hitters.

The linebackers are built around a prototypical middle linebacker, Matt Galambos, who understands the defenses and coverages, is a sure tackler and is very good at getting to the football. Bam Bradley and Nicholas Grigsby will flank Galambos. Bradley is a big hitter who has high-impact, big-play ability.

Three seniors anchor the defensive line, which is led by nose tackle Khaynin Mosley-Smith, who is more than just a run stopper. He is an agile 310 pounds and a disruptive force in the middle. Sophomore defensive end Rori Blair led the team with five sacks last season.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Junior place-kicker Chris Blewitt made 16 of 21 field goal attempts last season.

NOTEBOOK

With construction going on at Heinz Field, as crews added seats to the south end zone, Pitt moved its spring game to Highmark Stadium, which is a local soccer stadium. A crowd of 5,325 attended, which was well over capacity.

Most notable among the crowd were the famous Pitt alums who came out to watch and support new coach **Pat Narduzzi — Larry Fitzgerald**, **Aaron Donald**, **Curtis Martin**, **LeSean McCoy**, **Jim Covert** and **Bill Fralic**, among others. Fitzgerald and Donald helped coach the teams.

"I think there's a ton of excitement here," Narduzzi said.

• Returning starting quarterback **Chad Voytik** completed 176 of 287 passes (61.3 percent) for 2,223 yards, with 16 touchdowns and seven interceptions, last season. That was a good first year. But now he needs to take the next step, develop more as a passer and become more consistent.

He could be challenged in camp by Tennessee graduate transfer **Nathan Peterman**, who has two seasons of eligibility remaining.

"He's going to come in here to compete," Narduzzi said of Peterman.

"Chad knows that. Chad's embraced that, and Chad's got to look at it as, 'Hey, this guy is going to make me better.' I think it's always good when you can look in that rearview mirror and see that someone's there on you. I don't know that Chad had that throughout the spring, to be honest with you. So he'll have that in fall camp, and they'll learn together, and it will make us a better football team."

• Pitt announced in mid-May the addition of three transfers — defensive end **Dewayne Hendrix** (Tennessee), defensive tackle **Mark Scarpinato** (Michigan State) and receiver **Rafael Araujo-Lopes** (junior college).

Hendrix who has three years of eligibility left, will have to sit out in 2015. Scarpinato is immediately eligible as a graduate transfer. He didn't play football last season as he focused on medical school.

Araujo-Lopes can play in 2015 as well.

Hendrix was rated the 117th-best prospect in the 2014 recruiting class in 247Sports' Composite.

"Dewayne is an explosive player with big-play capability," Narduzzi said.

PANTHERS SPRING ROSTER

Quarterbacks	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
7 Adam Bertke	QB	6-6	210	Fr.	Maria Stein, OH
11 Nate Bossory	QB	6-3	235	So.	Chelsea, MI
16 Chad Voytik	QB	6-1	205	Jr.	Cleveland, TN
Running Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
20 Dennis Briggs	RB	5-10	195	Fr.	Wilkinsburg
24 James Conner	RB	6-2	250	Jr.	Erie
30 Stephen Ezekoye	RB	5-9	175	Fr.	Kensington, MD
29 Rachid Ibrahim	RB	6-1	185	Jr.	Rockville, MD
5 Chris James	RB	5-11	210	So.	Chicago, IL
37 Qadree Ollison	RB	6-2	215	Fr.	Niagara Falls, NY
22 Jameel Poteat	RB	5-10	210	Sr.	Harrisburg
35 George Aston	FB	6-0	240	Fr.	Stephens City, VA
43 Joey Kerle	FB	6-0	235	Fr.	Harrisburg
40 Colton Lively	FB	6-0	240	So.	Lake Dallas, TX
31 Jaymar Parrish	FB	6-2	270	Jr.	Monroeville
41 Anthony Rippole	FB	5-10	235	Jr.	McKees Rocks
Wide Receivers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
23 Tyler Boyd	WR	6-2	190	Jr.	Clairton
26 Joey Brungo	WR	6-1	185	Fr.	New Kensington
80 Zach Challingsworth	WR	6-2	190	So.	McDonald
39 Jaquaun Davidson	WR	6-2	170	Fr.	Elizabeth
19 Dontez Ford	WR	6-2	205	Jr.	McKees Rocks
32 Jordan Jones	WR	6-3	215	Fr.	Aurora, IL
48 Kellen McAlone	WR	6-2	195	Fr.	Dallas, TX
85 Jester Weah	WR	6-3	205	So.	Madison, WI
17 Chris Wuestner	WR	6-2	205	Jr.	Carlisle
28 Elijah Zeise	WR	6-2	195	Fr.	Pittsburgh
Tight Ends	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
45 Devon Edwards	TE	6-4	260	So.	Columbus, OH
81 Tony Harper	TE	6-4	220	So.	Toledo, OH
86 J.P. Holtz	TE	6-4	245	Sr.	Pittsburgh
84 Brian O'Neill	TE	6-6	245	Fr.	Wilmington, DE
83 Scott Orndoff	TE	6-5	260	Jr.	Waynesburg
Offensive Linemen	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
72 Carson Baker	OL	6-5	330	So.	Fairborn, OH
69 Adam Bisnowaty	OL	6-6	305	Jr.	Pittsburgh
78 Alex Bookser	OL	6-6	295	Fr.	Pittsburgh
77 Alex Galiyas	OL	6-2	270	Fr.	Dexter, MI
50 Mike Grimm	OL	6-6	325	Fr.	Bethel Park
62 John Guy	OL	6-7	285	Jr.	Somerville, MA
66 Mike Herndon	OL	6-4	320	Fr.	Greenville, VA
53 Dorian Johnson	OL	6-5	300	Jr.	Belle Vernon
75 Jaryd Jones-Smith	OL	6-7	335	So.	Voorhees, NJ
63 Alex Officer	OL	6-4	335	So.	Rochester, NY
60 Aaron Reese	OL	6-5	310	So.	Chambersburg
71 Gabe Roberts	OL	6-5	305	Jr.	New London, WI
57 Artie Rowell	OL	6-2	315	Sr.	Harrisburg

Defensive Linemen	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
92 Rori Blair	DL	6-4	230	So.	Pittsburgh
76 Connor Dintino	DL	6-3	295	Fr.	Mashpee, MA
36 Michael Dunn	DL	6-3	240	So.	Pittsburgh
54 Tyrique Jarrett	DL	6-3	335	Jr.	Pittsburgh
56 Justin Moody	DL	6-3	280	So.	Philadelphia
95 Khaynin Mosley-Smith	DL	6-0	310	Sr.	Pittsburgh
64 Trent Neavin	DL	6-0	260	So.	Martins Ferry, OH
48 Zach Poker	DL	6-4	240	So.	Oconomowoc, WI
5 Ejuan Price	DL	6-0	255	Sr.	Rankin
91 Darryl Render	DL	6-2	275	Sr.	Cleveland, OH
93 Shane Roy	DL	6-4	245	Fr.	Reading, OH
52 Shakir Soto	DL	6-3	270	Jr.	Wilkes-Barre
94 Jeremiah Taleni	DL	6-2	295	So.	Kaneohe, HI
90 Hez Trahan	DL	6-4	250	Fr.	Philadelphia
Linebackers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
4 Bam Bradley	LB	6-2	230	Jr.	Dayton, OH
30 Mike Caprara	LB	6-0	225	Jr.	Turtle Creek
50 Dom Cuono	LB	6-2	220	Fr.	Tampa, FL
59 Jamal Davis II	LB	6-2	200	Fr.	Canton, OH
49 Nico Elms	LB	6-0	210	So.	Gibsonia
40 James Folston	LB	6-3	200	Fr.	Cocoa, FL
47 Matt Galambos	LB	6-2	245	Jr.	Collingdale
87 Reggie Green	LB	6-2	225	So.	Cranford, NJ
3 Nicholas Grigsby	LB	6-1	220	Sr.	Trotwood, OH
27 Nico Lodovico	LB	6-1	215	So.	Murrysville
67 Alec Maternowski	LB	5-11	200	Fr.	Slinger, WI
53 Brian Popp	LB	6-0	220	Fr.	Loveland, OH
58 Quintin Wirginis	LB	6-2	220	So.	Pittsburgh
Defensive Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
25 Pat Amara	DB	6-2	190	So.	Philadelphia
22 Khari Anderson	DB	6-2	195	Fr.	Aurora, OH
21 Malik Henderson	DB	6-0	175	Fr.	Plantation, FL
29 Oluwaseun Idowu	DB	6-0	185	Fr.	Wexford
38 Ryan Lewis	DB	6-0	195	Jr.	Seattle, WA
14 Avonte Maddox	DB	5-9	165	So.	Detroit, MI
15 Reggie Mitchell	DB	6-0	185	Jr.	Pittsburgh
32 Phillipie Motley	DB	5-10	170	Fr.	Columbus, OH
26 Jevonte Pitts	DB	5-11	205	Jr.	Forest Hills
6 Lafayette Pitts	DB	5-11	195	Sr.	Duquesne
2 Terrish Webb	DB	5-11	180	Jr.	Clairton
35 Jalen Williams	DB	6-2	180	Fr.	Newburgh, NY
Specialists	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
12 Chris Blewitt	PK	5-9	185	Jr.	Alexandria, VA
45 Nick Goldsmith	P	6-2	210	Fr.	Dyer, IN
18 Ryan Winslow	P	6-5	210	So.	Maple Glen
67 David Murphy	LS	6-1	220	Sr.	Buffalo, NY
61 Pat Quirin	LS	6-1	220	Jr.	Pittsburgh

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	31.8	43
Rushing	249.5	15
Passing	185.9	102
Total	435.4	40

DEFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	26.3	58
Rushing	160.8	55
Passing	198.9	24
Total	359.8	33

TO MARGIN	PER GAME	RANK
- 5	- 0.38	T-95

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	GP	Effic	Cmp	Att	Int	Pct	Yards	TD	Long	Avg/G
C. Voytik	13	140.20	176	287	7	61.3	2233	16	53	171.8
T. Anderson	3	151.78	11	18	0	61.1	155	1	39	51.7

RECEIVING

NAME	GP	No.	Yards	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
T. Boyd	13	78	1261	16.2	8	53	97.0
J.P. Holtz	13	21	199	9.5	4	22	15.3
M. Garner	11	17	201	11.8	2	22	18.3

RUSHING

NAME	GP	Att.	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
J. Conner	13	298	1800	35	1765	5.9	26	74	135.8
C. Voytik	13	108	635	169	466	4.3	3	49	35.8
C. James	13	87	439	2	437	5.0	4	18	33.6

DEF. LEADERS

Tackles: A. Gonzalez 81, T. Thomas 73, M. Galambos 72
Tackles for loss: D. Render 6, T. Thomas 5.5, R. Blair 5.5
Sacks: R. Blair 5, D. Durham 3, N. Grigsby 3
Interceptions: R. Vinopal 2, L. Pitts 2, T. Webb 2

247SPORTS PANTHERS RECRUITING 2015

3 NEWCOMERS OF IMPACT

Jordan Whitehead
One of the best cornerbacks in the country. An absolute coup for the Panthers to keep this gem away from Alabama, Penn State and Ohio State. Whitehead has elite quickness and transitional speed with an NFL-type upside.

Jay Stocker
Versatile safety with range and the ability to help the Panthers early in both run and pass defense. Pitt stayed in-state and got one of the best safeties Pennsylvania had to offer.

Malik Henderson
Tall corner (6-0) that's all upside. He can play field corner and turn and go with most anyone he'll potentially see in the ACC. A steal out of south Florida with super length, football IQ and mobility.

SLEEPER

Saleem Brightwell
Coverted backer with tremendous growth potential. Well-coached and provides some versatility in the years to come for the Panthers.

2016 NEEDS

The Panthers will try to build on the excitement about their new staff and keep the talent in their region at home. Finding defensive linemen with length, perimeter speed on both sides, a big back, a future QB and more run blockers will be the emphasis. There's an assortment of Panther legacy prospects in North Carolina this cycle that will be a priority as well.

— Ryan Bartow

247SPORTS COMPOSITE

0	2	12	0
✪✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪	✪✪

Commitments	14
Average Stars	3.14
Total Stars	44
National Rank: 62	ACC: 13

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Saleem Brightwell	OLB	6-3	205	✪✪✪	Paramus, NJ	Paramus Catholic

Ranked the No. 49 outside linebacker and No. 17 prospect in New Jersey according to the 247Sports Composite…First-team All-New Jersey...First-team All-New Jersey Non-Public... First-team All-Bergen County...Compiled 84 tackles, 12 TFLs and eight sacks as a senior.

Ben DiNucci	QB	6-3	198	✪✪✪	Gibsonia	Pine-Richland

Ranked the No. 65 pro-style quarterback and No. 38 prospect in Pennsylvania according to the 247Sports Composite…First player in Pennsylvania history to throw for 4,000 yards in a season… Passed for 4,269 yards and 46 touchdowns in leading Pine-Richland to a 15-1 record, the WPIAL Class AAAA championship and PIAA title game...*USA TODAY* All-American (second team)...Pennsylvania's Gatorade Player of the Year.

Allen Edwards	WDE	6-3	247	✪✪✪	Franklin, MA	Dean College

Ranked the No. 10 weakside defensive end and No. 1 prospect in Massachusetts according to the 247Sports Composite…Junior-college defensive end prospect who played at Dean College during the 2013 and 2014 seasons...First-team All-Northeast Football Conference... Led Dean with 13.5 TFLs and eight sacks during the 2014 season.

Darrin Hall	RB	6-0	205	✪✪✪✪	Youngstown, OH	Fitch

Ranked the No. 25 running back and No. 12 prospect in Ohio according to the 247Sports Composite…Played in only four full games in 2014 due to a knee injury...As a junior, was named to the Associated Press Division All-Ohio Team.

Malik Henderson	CB	6-0	175	✪✪✪	Hallandale, FL	Hallandale

Enrolled in January… Ranked the No. 92 cornerback and No. 143 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Starting cornerback who helped Hallandale to an 11-1 record and the Florida 6A playoffs as a senior...A relative newcomer to football, he did not start playing the game until his sophomore year of high school.

Quadree Henderson	APB	5-9	172	✪✪✪✪	Wilmington, DE	Alexis I. Dupont

Ranked the No. 13 wide receiver and No. 1 prospect in Delaware according to the 247Sports Composite… First-team All-Delaware Interscholastic Football Coaches Association (DIFCA) at three different positions... Wide receiver, defensive back and returner.

Gentry Ivery	WR	6-1	205	✪✪✪	Mansfield, TX	Mansfield Legacy

Ranked the No. 222 wide receiver and No. 243 prospect in Texas according to the 247Sports Composite…Leading receiver in District 14-5A as a senior...First-team All-District 14-5A.

Dane Jackson	S	6-1	170	✪✪✪	Leetsdale	Quaker Valley

Ranked the No. 131 safety and No. 40 prospect in Pennsylvania according to the 247Sports Composite…*Pittsburgh Tribune-Review* "Terrific 25" and All-Century Conference as an all-purpose player and defensive back.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Anthony McKee	OLB	6-2	190	✪✪✪	Columbus, OH	Marion-Franklin

Ranked the No. 28 outside linebacker and No. 19 prospect in Ohio according to the 247Sports Composite…All-Ohio Division IV Special Mention and first team All-Central District Division IV as a senior...First-team All-Central District Division II, All-Ohio Division II (third team) and to *The Columbus Dispatch* All-Metro Team (second team)...Selected to play in the Ohio High School Football Coaches Association (OHSFCA) North-South All-Star Classic.

Alex Paulina	OG	6-4	292	✪✪✪	Canonsburg	Canon-mcmillan Shs

Ranked the No. 41 offensive guard and No. 14 prospect in Pennsylvania according to the 247Sports Composite…Pennsylvania Football News second team All-Class AAAA... *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* South "Fabulous 22"...The Almanac "Pigskin Premieres."

Tony Pilato	OT	6-7	295	✪✪✪	Greensburg	Hempfield Area Shs

Ranked the No. 104 offensive tackle and No. 22 prospect in Pennsylvania according to the 247Sports Composite…*Greensburg Tribune-Review* "Terrific 25"...*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* East "Fabulous 22"...All-Foothills Conference.

Jay Stocker	S	6-2	192	✪✪✪	Coatesville	Coatesville Area

Ranked the No. 34 safety and No. 13 prospect in Pennsylvania according to the 247Sports Composite…A two-way All-Ches-Mont National Division Team selection as a defensive back and "athlete"...*Daily Local News* All-Area...Honorable Mention *Pennsylvania Football News* All-Class AAAA.

Tre Tipton	WR	6-1	170	✪✪✪	Spring Church	Apollo-Ridge

Ranked the No. 193 safety and No. 35 prospect in Pennsylvania according to the 247Sports Composite…Selected All-State Class AA by the Pennsylvania Sports Writers and Pennsylvania Football News in the "athlete" category...Named to the *Pennsylvania Football News* 2014 #TeamPA, which recognizes the best players in the state regardless of school classification.

Jordan Whitehead	CB	5-11	185	✪✪✪	Monaca	Central Valley

Ranked the No. 13 safety and No. 1 prospect in Pennsylvania according to the 247Sports Composite…Helped Central Valley to a 15-1 record, the WPIAL Class AAA championship and the PIAA state title game...*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* and *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review* Player of the Year...Selected All-State Class AAA by the Pennsylvania Sports Writers...*Pennsylvania Football News* first-team All-Class AAA.

PITT

PLAYER PROFILE

Conner Out to Put Panthers on the Map

Pitt's James Conner had a record-setting sophomore season, bursting onto the scene as one of the best running backs in the country.

In his mind, though, his 2014 campaign — in which he ran for 1,765 yards and 26 touchdowns — was not successful because the Panthers were only 6-7 and were never in contention for the ACC title.

"All the awards, the rushing records, the touchdowns — that's all nice and I can look back and be proud of some of what I accomplished," said Conner, the ACC Player of the Year in 2014. "But football is a team game and I know my teammates and I are focused on winning. The only goal is an ACC championship.

"I want to be remembered as being part of a team that helped put Pitt back on the map."

Conner's competitive edge comes from being the youngest of five boys, which meant always trying to beat his older brothers at every game or contest. That edge was further honed in high school when Conner had very little interest from Division I colleges.

He ended up getting a scholarship offer from Pitt after visiting its camp before his senior season, but that coaching staff recruited him to play defensive end.

Conner, who is from Erie, Pa., was a fullback for the early part of his high school career. But he moved to tailback and had a breakout senior season, so Pitt's coaches gave him a shot to play running back before his freshman season.

The rest, as they say, is history.

"My brothers helped raise me; they pushed me; they made me compete with them, so, yes, that's a big part of who I am today as a competitor," Conner said. "But I also took notice of all the guys who were recruited more than me, guys who were in the Top 100 and all that stuff. That is still something that motivates me because I feel like I have something to prove every day."

Photo by Joe Robbins

Conner (6-2, 250) last season broke Tony Dorsett's school records for touchdowns, rushing touchdowns and points. In an effort to keep improving, he has focused on becoming a better pass catcher so he can stay on the field in passing situations.

That should impress the new coaches.

"It is hard to lose the people who recruited you," Conner said. "But we adapted to the new staff pretty quickly because they came right in and made us feel comfortable. They are very intense, very competitive and that's really set the tone for us."

BEST AND BRIGHTEST

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

RB JAMES CONNER

At 6-2, 250, Conner has an incredible combination of power and speed. ... Rushed 298 times for 1,765 yards and 26 touchdowns last season. ... Was the ACC Player of the Year. ... His 26 touchdowns broke Tony Dorsett's school record for rushing (22) and total (23) touchdowns in a season. ... His 1,765 rushing yards represented the third-highest total in ACC history. ... Was used more as a receiver out of backfield in spring practice.

EMERGING STAR

WR DONTEZ FORD

Played in all 13 games last season, starting the final three, after starter Manasseh Garner was injured. ... Had an excellent spring and showed he can be a playmaker opposite All-American Tyler Boyd. ... Had three receptions for 50 yards and a touchdown last season. ... Has excellent speed and runs great routes. Has really developed a soft set of hands in the past year. ... Coaches will use him in various roles across the offense this season.

TOP NEWCOMER

CB JORDAN WHITEHEAD

He was the No. 1 overall prospect in Pennsylvania by the 247Sports' Composite, and the 106th-best player nationally. ... Will compete for a starting job in the secondary immediately. ... Scored 35 touchdowns as a senior at Central Valley High School last season in five different ways: rushing, receiving, interception return, punt return and kick return. ... His touchdowns averaged 43.7 yards. ... He rushed for 1,933 yards on 148 attempts, and intercepted seven passes.

Photos courtesy of Pittsburgh Athletics.

He's reliable, although he had a high-profile miss on a potential game-winner in a 51-48 double-overtime loss to Duke. Blewitt ended up with 98 points, tied for the fourth-highest total in school history.

Sophomore Ryan Winslow averaged 40.1 yards per punt, but coaches would like him to improve on his placement inside the 20.

Tyler Boyd is a big-play threat on punt and kick returns. He averaged 10.1 yards per punt return and 27.6 yards per kickoff return last season.

SCHEDULE ANALYSIS

The schedule-makers didn't do a team in transition any favors; five of the Panthers' first seven games are on the road.

While the first two games (Youngstown State and at Akron) appear to be lighter touches, remember this: Pitt lost to Youngstown State in 2012 and fell to the Zips last year.

Pitt plays a total of eight teams that played in bowl games and will have its hands full in non-conference games at Iowa (Sept. 19) and at home against Notre Dame (Nov. 7).

The Panthers do catch a break in their two crossover games with the Atlantic Division as they don't play either of the two heavyweights, Clemson and Florida State, but they do have to play Louisville, which won nine games last season.

— Paul Zeise

SYRACUSE ORANGE

For more coverage of the Orange, visit syracuse.247Sports.com

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Tim Lester **DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR:** Chuck Bullough **STADIUM:** Carrier Dome: 49,250

NEW OFFENSE, INEXPERIENCED DEFENSE TO TEST ORANGE

After making a bowl game in three of four seasons, Syracuse lost nine of its last 10 games in 2014 en route to a 3-9 finish. The program will undergo heavy changes on both sides of the ball in 2015 while head coach Scott Shafer and staff work to keep their jobs under a new athletic director who will replace Daryl Gross.

After running George McDonald's gun-read offense for the last two years, offensive coordinator Tim Lester is installing a versatile offense that is expected to feature more downhill running and varied personnel groupings.

A unit that was among the worst in the country at scoring touchdowns will look to utilize some of its best athletes at the hybrid back position. That player will line up on the wing, in the slot and in the backfield.

"I love it," quarterback Terrel Hunt said of the new position. "It creates mismatches all over and will put the defense in binds."

Defensively, the Orange returns only one player who started all 12 games last season — and defensive end Ron Thompson did so while playing out of position at defensive tackle. Defensive coordinator Chuck Bullough has his work cut out for him with youth and inexperience strewn across all three levels of the defense, so much so that it is expected that at least two true freshmen will join the two-deep upon arrival in the summer.

OFFENSE

An unproductive system mixed with a horde of injuries resulted in Syracuse scoring touchdowns on just 8.4 percent of its possessions last season, the fourth-worst mark among Power 5 conference teams since 2004.

SU returns redshirt senior quarterback Terrel Hunt, who is fully recovered after fracturing his fibula five games into the 2014 season.

Hunt is focusing on becoming more of a pocket passer than a run-heavy signal caller. He did not wow in a vanilla spring game, but said afterward that he felt he "reclaimed" the starting position from younger competitors. Hunt sounded enthusiastic about the simplified approach of coordinator Tim Lester, who is also the quarterbacks coach.

"I love it because it gives me freedom," Hunt said. "It allows me to just go on the field and play. There are not restrictions."

One of the keys to Hunt being a successful passer — he was 83 of 145 for 983 yards, with one touchdown and four interceptions in his five games last season — is maintaining a healthy offensive line. SU played 10 offensive linemen last season, rarely repeating a starting lineup from week to week.

The Orange brings back experience in the trenches in redshirt seniors Rob Trudo, Ivan Foy and Nick Robinson, but all have injury histories. Trudo will slide from left guard to center to replace the graduated John Miller. Foy will swing from right tackle to left tackle to fill the void left by third-team All-ACC member Sean Hickey, who started 38 straight games for Syracuse.

Sophomore speedster Ervin Philips is shifting from running back to hybrid back, where he will join senior Ashton Broyld, who has played every other offensive skill position during his Syracuse career. Both are expected to be factors in the passing game while also taking carries between and outside the tackles.

Sophomore Steve Ishmael returns as the team's best receiving threat after hauling in 27 passes for 415 yards and three touchdowns as a true freshman. A cast of unproven entities, including redshirt senior Alvin Cornelius, will battle for the other starting receiver position.

Junior Josh Parris and junior college transfer Trey Dunkelberger are expected to fight for time at tight end. Lester's offense is expected to feature some double tight end sets.

In the backfield, Devante McFarlane and George Morris II will look to hold off a talented group of incoming freshmen. The group as a whole will look to improve on a tremendously disappointing 2014 season in which a running back failed to score a touchdown after Week 1.

Hunt ran for 292 yards and six touchdowns in his limited time last season.

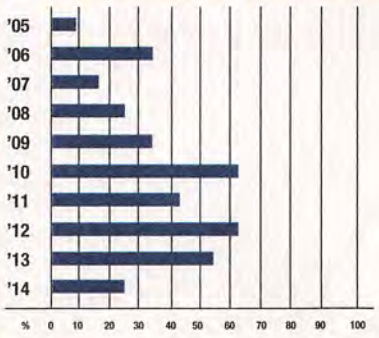
SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	'14 Record
Sept. 4	RHODE ISLAND	1-11
Sept. 12	WAKE FOREST	3-9
Sept. 19	CENTRAL MICHIGAN	7-6
Sept. 26	LSU	8-5
Oct. 10	at South Florida	4-8
Oct. 17	at Virginia	5-7
Oct. 24	PITTSBURGH	6-7
Oct. 31	at Florida State	13-1
Nov. 7	at Louisville	9-4
Nov. 14	CLEMSON	10-3
Nov. 21	at NC State	8-5
Nov. 28	BOSTON COLLEGE	7-6

RESULTS

3-9, 1-7		
W	VILLANOVA (2OT)	27-26
W	at Central Michigan	40-3
L	MARYLAND	20-34
L	vs. Notre Dame	15-31
L	LOUISVILLE	6-28
L	FLORIDA STATE	20-38
W	at Wake Forest	30-7
L	at Clemson	6-16
L	NC STATE	17-24
L	DUKE	10-27
L	at Pittsburgh	7-30
L	at Boston College	7-28

10-YEAR WINNING TREND



AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:
Syracuse, N.Y.

2014:
3-9 overall, 1-7 ACC (T-6th, Atlantic)

COACH:
Scott Shafer — At Syracuse and overall: 10-15, 2 years

RETURNING STARTERS:
12; 7 offense, 3 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH:
QB Terrel Hunt, WR Steve Ishmael, HB Ashton Broyld, HB Ervin Philips, C Rob Trudo, DE Ron Thompson, MLB Zaire Franklin, P Riley Dixon

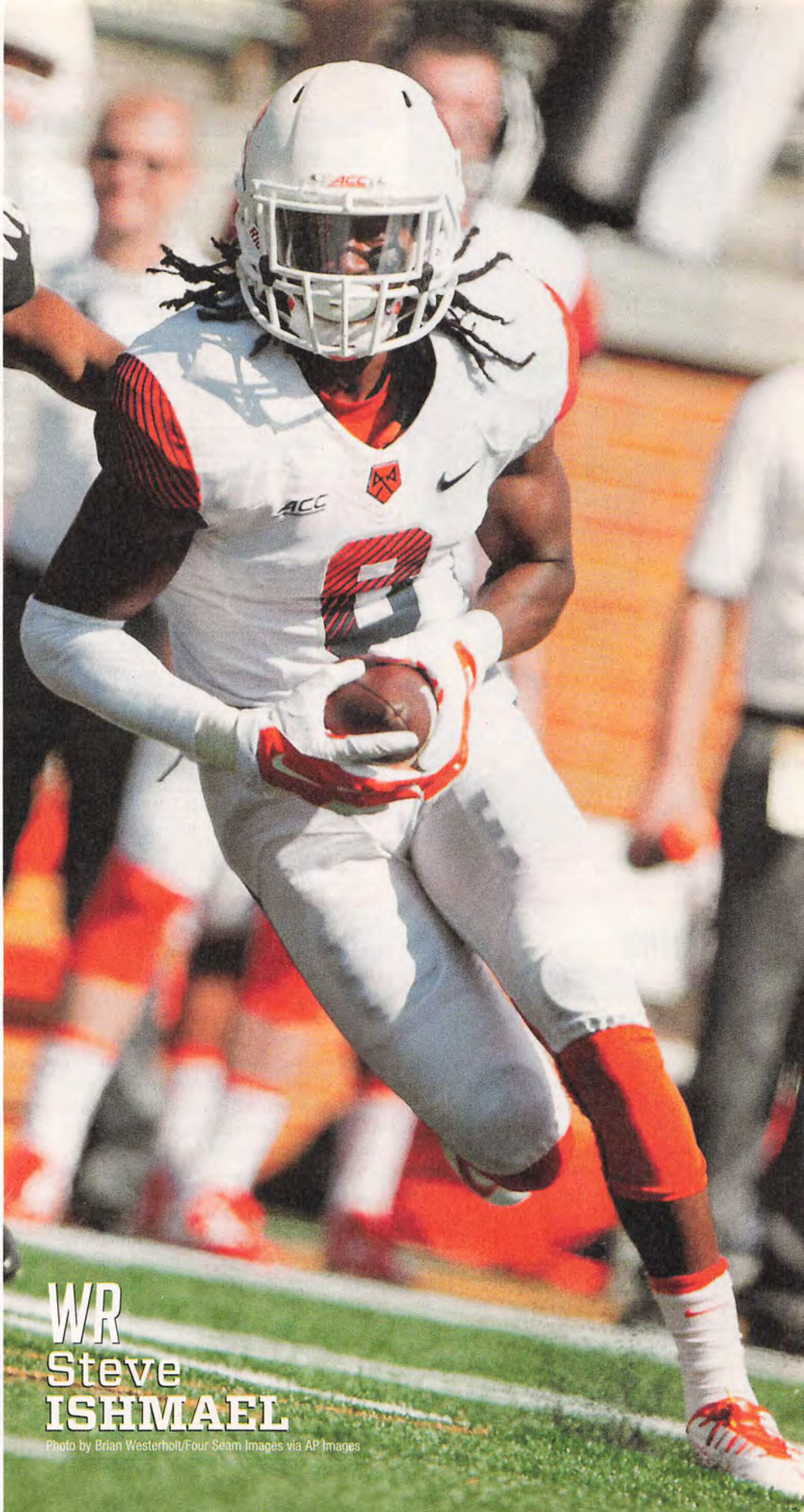
PRIMARY STRENGTHS:
The Orange returns most of its playmakers on offense and is hoping to maximize its talent by moving Broyld and Philips to the hybrid back positions. SU also features experience on the offensive line.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS:
The margin for error is razor thin across the board. Another rash of injuries like last season to the offensive line or skill-position players, and production will be crippled. SU running backs rushed for only two TDs last season — none after the season-opener. The new offensive scheme will hinge on establishing the run game.

KEY LOSSES:
LT Sean Hickey, LB Cameron Lynch, FS Durell Eskridge

OVERVIEW:
Syracuse has many moving parts heading into a crucial season for third-year coach Scott Shafer. With a new offensive system and unproven cast of defensive personnel, the Orange will have to work quickly to bounce back from a disappointing 2014 season.

KEY NUMBER:
4.91 Yards per play for Syracuse last season, which ranked second-to-last among ACC teams.



WR
Steve
ISHMAEL

Photo by Brian Westerholt/Four Seam Images via AP Images

LB

MARQEZ HODGE

Photo by AP Photo/Nick Lisi

SCOUTING REPORT: Offense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
QB	**Terrel Hunt***	Sr.	Fully recovered from last season's fractured fibula.	Austin Wilson, So.
RB	Devante McFarlane	Jr.	Averaging 6.1 yards per carry over two-year career.	George Morris II, Jr.
HB	Ervin Philips	So.	Saw carries as a true freshman.	**Ben Lewis, Jr.***
WR	Steve Ishmael	So.	Had 415 yards, three TDs as a true freshman.	Brisly Estime, Jr.
WR	Alvin Cornelius	Sr.	A first-year starter with minimal experience.	Sean Avant, So.
TE	**Josh Parris***	Jr.	Will have more prominent role in new offense.	Cam MacPherson, Jr.
LT	**Ivan Foy***	Sr.	Converting from right tackle; six starts last season.	Michael Lasker, Sr.
LG	**Nick Robinson***	Sr.	Solid blocker with injury history.	Alex Hayes, So.
C	**Rob Trudo***	Sr.	Converted guard with strength and toughness.	Jason Emerich, Jr.
RG	Aaron Roberts	Fr.	Won the starting spot during spring ball.	Seamus Shanley, Sr.
RT	**Omari Palmer***	Jr.	Athletic and strong, will be leader in 2016.	Jamal McGloster, So.
PK	**Cole Murphy***	So.	Won starting job as true freshman walk-on.	Sterling Hofrichter, Fr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

SCOUTING REPORT: Defense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
DE	**Ron Thompson***	Jr.	Started all 13 games out of position at DT in 2014.	Luke Arciniega, Jr.
DT	John Raymon	Sr.	Injury-plagued strongman with history of knee issues.	Chris Slayton, Fr.
NT	Kayton Samuels	Fr.	Bright spot in spring ball at a position of need.	Wayne Williams, Sr.
DE	Donnie Simmons Jr.	Sr.	First-year starter with one career sack.	Jake Pickard, Fr.
LB	**Marqez Hodge***	Jr.	Moving from MIKE to WILL; 61 career tackles.	Alryk Perry, So.
LB	Zaire Franklin	So.	Savvy second-year player moving into leadership role.	Colton Moskal, Fr.
LB	Parris Bennett	So.	Unproven entity at position with limited depth.	Jonathan Thomas, So.
CB	**Julian Whigham***	Sr.	Athletic corner who called 2014 a "wasted" year.	Corey Winfield, So.
CB	Wayne Morgan	Sr.	Coming off knee injury that required surgery last year.	Cordell Hudson, Fr.
SS	Antwan Cordy	So.	Moved from CB during spring ball and won starting job.	Chauncey Scissum, So.
FS	Rodney Williams	So.	Tremendous instincts, but no in-game experience.	Marquise Blair, Fr.
P	**Riley Dixon***	Sr.	Probably SU's safest bet for a strong performance in '15.	Sterling Hofrichter, Fr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

DEFENSE

Where to begin? Syracuse will replace seven of its eight leading tacklers from last season and is expected to feature new faces across the board.

Defensive line coach Tim Daoust may face his toughest challenge in the four years he's been with Syracuse. Known for maximizing the talent he gets, Daoust has only one experienced player to work with in Ron Thompson, who will be sliding back to end from defensive tackle. He recorded 32 tackles, including seven for loss and three sacks, last season.

At the other defensive end position, senior Donnie Simmons and redshirt junior Luke Arciniega, a converted linebacker, are two options to start. On the interior of the line, the Orange returns two seniors with injury histories in John Raymon and Wayne Williams, and two redshirt freshmen in Kayton Samuels and Chris Slayton.

True freshmen Jake Pickard and Steven Clark are the most likely of the newcomers to receive immediate playing time, but Daoust and Co. will be keeping close tabs on all seven defensive linemen from the team's 2015 class through camp.

Syracuse lost starting linebackers Cameron Lynch and Dyshawn Davis, who were trying to latch on to NFL rosters this summer. Junior Marqez Hodge slides from the middle to the weakside linebacker position, while sophomore Zaire Franklin takes over at MIKE. Franklin racked up 44 tackles as a true freshman and brings a level of maturity and savvy unique for players his age.

Sophomores Parris Bennett and Jonathan Thomas are expected to battle for Davis' strongside spot.

The Orange loses three starters in the secondary and all of its rotational safeties. Senior cornerback Julian Whigham brings the most experience, but he was the clear weak point in the group last season. Whigham was picked on regularly by opposing quarterbacks.

Senior Wayne Morgan will likely line up opposite Whigham after missing most of last season with a knee injury. Sophomore Antwan Cordy shifted from corner to strong safety in the spring and won the starting job. Sophomore Rodney Williams or redshirt sophomore Chauncey Scissum will claim the free safety spot.

SPECIAL TEAMS

This looks to be Syracuse's lone stable unit. The Orange returns starters at every position except punt returner and long snapper.

Redshirt senior punter Riley Dixon is one of the best in the ACC, averaging 42.4 yards per attempt last season. Sophomore walk-on Cole Murphy will look to hold onto the job he won as a true freshman, with senior Ryan Norton and true freshman Sterling Hofrichter competing for time.

Murphy made 13 of 16 field goal attempts last season, including a pair of 50-yarders.

NOTEBOOK

Syracuse likely will need contributions from true freshmen on more than just the defensive line.

While defensive end **Jake Pickard** and defensive tackle **Steven Clark** are probably the first two names on the top of that list, at least two of the three running backs in the incoming class could very well see carries. **Dontae Strickland**, one of the top backs from New Jersey, is probably first in line there, followed by in-state talent **Jordan Fredericks**.

If free safety **Marquise Blair**, an Ohio native, can qualify, he'll probably make the two-deep depth chart immediately, as the team returns only three scholarship safeties. Safety **Christopher Fredrick** is another strong candidate.

• The most notable accomplishment for Syracuse in the last year might be a recruiting win. Class of 2016 RB **Robert Washington** chose the Orange over other finalists Alabama, Florida, TCU, Michigan and North Carolina in late April, and the four-star talent could be impactful enough to shift the program's recruiting ability.

If SU can hold onto Washington until he arrives early on campus in January and capitalize with other national recognized recruits, coach **Scott Shafer** may be able to survive another sub-six win season.

• When athletic director **Daryl Gross** was removed shortly after the NCAA handed down sanctions to Syracuse this winter, Carrier Dome managing director **Pete Sala** took over on an interim basis. He made bold staff moves, firing three employees and declaring that the school's famed No. 44 would be unretired.

The number, worn by **Jim Brown**, **Ernie Davis** and **Floyd Little**, will be handed out to a current member of the team on an "as worthy" basis, as determined by a committee that will include Little.

• Shafer brought back another Western Michigan colleague in **Jake Moreland** this offseason. Moreland will coach tight ends, hybrid backs and also work with the offensive tackles on blocking combinations with the tight ends. Covering the back side on outside zone plays has been an issue for the team in the past.

Moreland has close ties with offensive coordinator **Tim Lester**, coaching under him at numerous stops, including WMU before Syracuse.

ORANGE SPRING ROSTER

Quarterbacks		Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
10	Terrel Hunt	QB	6-3	234	Sr.	Rosedale
4	AJ Long	QB	6-0	177	So.	Lebanon, TN
16	Zack Mahoney	QB	6-2	202	So.	LaGrange, IL
5	Austin Wilson	QB	6-3	214	Jr.	Camp Hill, PA
Running Backs		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
29	Devante McFarlane	RB	6-0	198	Jr.	Wheatley Heights
27	George Morris	RB	6-0	194	Sr.	Lawrenceville, GA
14	Ervin Philips	RB	5-11	179	So.	West Haven, CT
Wide Receivers		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
83	Sean Avant	WR	5-10	191	Jr.	Miramar, FL
1	Ashton Broyld	WR	6-3	216	Sr.	Rochester
82	Alvin Cornelius	WR	6-1	193	Sr.	Staten Island
81	Jamal Custis	WR	6-5	232	So.	Philadelphia, PA
86	Adly Enoicy	WR	6-5	230	So.	Delray Beach, FL
9	Brisly Estime	WR	5-9	180	Jr.	Delray Beach, FL
2	Quinta Funderburk	WR	6-4	201	Sr.	Norfolk, VA
7	Troy Green	WR	6-1	180	Jr.	Skaneateles
8	Steve Ishmael	WR	6-2	184	So.	Miami, FL
84	Ben Lewis	WR	6-2	212	Sr.	Middletown, MD
Tight Ends		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
46	PJ Batten	TE	6-3	230	Jr.	Miami, FL
11	Trey Dunkelberger	TE	6-4	245	So.	Shillington, PA
42	Jacob Green	TE	6-1	256	Sr.	Seattle, WA
90	Cameron MacPherson	TE	6-3	235	Sr.	Syracuse
87	Kendall Moore	TE	6-5	231	Jr.	Chicago, IL
89	Josh Parris	TE	6-4	245	Jr.	Stone Mountain, GA
80	Tyler Provo	TE	6-2	242	Jr.	West Palm Beach, FL
Offensive Linemen		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
77	Keaton Darney	OL	6-3	238	So.	Los Angeles, CA
79	Taylor Hindy	OL	6-4	323	Sr.	West Hills, CA
73	Jon Burton	OT	6-8	321	Jr.	Spotsylvania, VA
72	Ivan Foy	OT	6-5	292	Sr.	Brooklyn
67	Michael Lasker	OT	6-5	303	Sr.	Corona, CA
65	Jamar McGloster	OT	6-7	303	Jr.	Hillside, NJ
75	Denzel Ward	OT	6-8	353	So.	Chicago, IL
71	Alex Hayes	OG	6-2	303	Jr.	Ellenwood, GA
57	Omari Palmer	OG	6-3	303	Sr.	Coram
59	Aaron Roberts	OG	6-4	285	So.	Chicago, IL
68	Nick Robinson	OG	6-6	279	Sr.	Baldwinsville
74	Seamus Shanley	OG	6-1	279	Sr.	Syracuse
55	Rob Trudo	OG	6-4	300	Sr.	Farrell, PA
78	Jason Emerich	C	6-3	285	Sr.	New Ringgold, PA
58	Donnie Foster	C	6-3	316	So.	Savannah, GA
Defensive Linemen		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
5	Luke Arciniega	DE	6-4	240	Sr.	Sparks, NV
63	Rony Charles	DL	6-2	296	Sr.	Medford, MA
55	Marcus Coleman	DT	6-1	281	Sr.	Voorhees, NJ
91	Isaiah Johnson	DE	6-4	287	Jr.	New Castle, DE
51	Donnie Simmons Jr.	DE	6-2	248	Sr.	White Plains
95	Chris Slayton	DE	6-4	267	Fr.	University Park, IL
13	Ron Thompson	DE	6-3	257	Sr.	Southfield, MI
50	John Raymon	NT	6-5	325	Sr.	Richboro, PA
97	Kayton Samuels	NT	6-0	319	Fr.	Ellenwood, GA
75	Wayne Williams	NT	6-4	326	Sr.	Brooklyn
Linebackers		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
30	Parris Bennett	LB	6-0	223	So.	Detroit, MI
45	Zaire Franklin	LB	6-0	238	So.	Philadelphia, PA
33	Marqez Hodge	LB	5-11	218	Jr.	Miami, FL
58	Hernz Laguerre	LB	6-1	226	Sr.	Spring Valley
14	Colton Moskal	LB	6-0	225	So.	Lake Zurich, IL
49	Alryk Perry	LB	6-1	215	Jr.	Columbus, AL
17	Jonathan Thomas	LB	6-1	202	So.	Lawrenceville, GA
7	Oliver Vigille	LB	6-2	225	Sr.	Miami, FL
Defensive Backs		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
28	Antwan Cordy	CB	5-8	169	So.	Homestead, FL
15	Juwan Dowels	CB	5-10	166	So.	Sunrise, FL
20	Cordell Hudson	CB	5-11	166	So.	Largo, FL
25	Eric Jackson	CB	5-9	168	Sr.	Inglewood, CA
2	Wayne Morgan	CB	5-11	198	Sr.	Brooklyn
42	Joe Stanard	CB	5-10	189	Jr.	Baldwinsville
1	Julian Whigham	CB	6-1	185	Sr.	West Palm Beach, FL
11	Corey Winfield	CB	6-1	181	Jr.	St. Louis, MO
21	Chauncey Scissum	FS	6-2	206	Jr.	West Henrietta
16	Rodney Williams	FS	5-10	187	So.	Cherry Hill, NJ
41	Eric Anthony	SS	6-0	200	Jr.	Baldwinsville
Specialists		**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
92	Riley Dixon	K/P	6-5	221	Sr.	Blossvale
36	Alex Hodgkinson	K	6-2	185	Sr.	London, England
48	Cole Murphy	K	6-3	193	So.	Castaic, CA
12	Ryan Norton	K	5-11	183	Sr.	Garden City
53	Nathan Hines	LS	6-6	256	So.	Catonsville, MD
56	Matt Keller	LS	5-11	221	Fr.	Willow Street, PA
69	Keith Mitsuuchi	LS	5-10	227	Sr.	Torrance, CA

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	17.1	T-118
Rushing	145.8	90
Passing	184.1	103
Total	329.9	113

DEFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	24.3	37
Rushing	139.3	31
Passing	209.9	38
Total	349.2	26

TO MARGIN	PER GAME	RANK
- 1	- 0.08	T-69

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	GP	Effic	Cmp	Att	Int	Pct	Yards	TD	Long	Avg/G
T. Hunt	5	110.9	83	145	4	57.2	983	1	51	196.6
AJ Long	6	99.8	89	165	8	53.9	935	4	46	155.8

RECEIVING

NAME	GP	No.	Yards	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
J. West	10	49	700	14.2	0	51	70.0
S. Ishmael	10	27	415	15.3	3	46	41.5
B. Lewis	9	24	275	11.4	1	48	30.5

RUSHING

NAME	GP	Att.	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
P. Gulley	12	128	667	53	614	4.8	1	65	51.1
A. Ameen-Moore	11	62	359	22	337	5.4	1	53	30.6
T. Hunt	5	52	340	48	292	5.6	6	36	58.4

DEF. LEADERS

Tackles: C. Lynch 97, D. Davis 71, D. Eskridge 68
Tackles for loss: C. Lynch 12, E. Crume 9, two tied with 7
Sacks: C. Lynch 7, M. Hodge 3, R. Thompson 3
Interceptions: B. Reddish 3, five tied with 1

247SPORTS ORANGE RECRUITING 2015

3 NEWCOMERS OF IMPACT

Colin Byrne
A big lineman with growth potential out of national powerhouse Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) St. Thomas Aquinas, a program where their signees usually hit on the next level.

Dontae Strickland
The Cuse's top signee is potentially the feature back of the future given his playmaking ability. Chose Syracuse over several other offers.

Amir Ealey
All upside. Huge growth potential to play either defensive end or tight end for the Orange. A rugged blocker with the quickness to also make plays on defense.

SLEEPER

Daivon Ellison
A cat-quick cornerback that can help early as a nickel back. Comes in well-coached on the prep level and could help the Orange on special teams right away.

2016 NEEDS

Syracuse, almost as much as any program in the ACC, needs to upgrade its speed and overall talent across the board with every position being a need area.

— Ryan Bartow

247SPORTS COMPOSITE

0	0	24	4
✪✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪	✪✪

Commitments	28
Average Stars	2.86
Total Stars	80
National Rank: 57	ACC: 12

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Evan Adams	OT	6-6	300	✪✪✪	Norwalk, CT	Norwalk

Ranked the No. 41 offensive tackle and No. 7 prospect in Connecticut according to the 247Sports Composite…2014 *New Haven Register* All-State … 2014 All-East region … 2014 All-FCIAC First Team … Named to the Hearst Connecticut Media Super 33 All-Star Football Team … As a senior, recorded 46 tackles, including five for a loss and four sacks.

Marquise Blair S 6-3 180 ✪✪✪ Wooster, OH Wooster
Ranked the No. 31 safety and No. 28 prospect in Ohio according to the 247Sports Composite… Invited to play in the 2015 Ohio-Michigan Border Classic and the 2015 Ohio North-South All-Star Classic … 2014 Associated Press All-Ohio First Team.

Colin Byrne OG 6-5 300 ✪✪✪ Fort Lauderdale, FL St. Thomas Aquinas
Ranked the No. 108 offensive guard and No. 288 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 *Sun Sentinel* Florida Class 7A All-State Third Team … Helped lead St. Thomas Aquinas to a 15-1 record and the 2014 Class 7A state championship.

Kenny Carter OG 6-5 260 ✪✪ Plainfield, NJ Plainfield
Ranked the No. 152 offensive guard and No. 56 prospect in New Jersey according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 NJ.com Top 50 honorable mention … All-county honorable mention.

Steven Clark DT 6-3 290 ✪✪✪ Guntersville, AL Brindlee Mt Sch
Ranked the No. 103 defensive tackle and No. 52 prospect in Alabama according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 Alabama Sports Writers Association Class 3A All-State … Three-time all-region selection … Three-time All-Marshall County first-team ... As a senior, recorded 84 tackles, including 10 sacks.

Samuel Clausman OG 6-4 301 ✪✪✪ Fort Lauderdale, FL St. Thomas Aquinas
Ranked the No. 91 offensive guard and No. 218 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 Florida Class 7A All-State First Team … Helped lead St. Thomas Aquinas to a 15-1 record and the 2014 Class 7A state championship.

Cody Conway OT 6-6 280 ✪✪✪ Plainfield, IL Plainfield North
Ranked the No. 121 offensive tackle and No. 26 prospect in Illinois according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 Illinois All-State First Team … 2014 *Chicago Sun-Times* All-Area selection … Invited to play in the 2014 NUC Senior All-American game.

Tyler Cross DT 6-2 275 ✪✪✪ Douglasville, GA Chapel Hill
Ranked the No. 90 defensive tackle and No. 153 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Team captain as a junior and senior … As a senior, posted 41 tackles, including 3.5 for a loss.

Shyheim Cullen ILB 6-1 210 ✪✪✪ Lowell, MA Lowell
Ranked the No. 73 defensive tackle and No. 11 prospect in Massachusetts according to the 247Sports Composite… Two-time all-state selection … Three-time all-conference honoree … *Boston Herald* All-Scholastic selection.

Andrejas Duerig OG 6-4 281 ✪✪✪ Chicago, IL Mount Carmel
Ranked the No. 73 offensive guard and No. 28 prospect in Illinois according to the 247Sports Composite… Invited to play in the 2014 NUC Senior All-Amiercan game … Also participated in track and field.

Eric Dungey QB 6-4 195 ✪✪✪ Lake Oswego, OR Lakeridge
Ranked the No. 27 dual-threat quarterback and No. 4 prospect in Oregon according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 All-State second-team and All-USA Oregon … Two-time all-league selection … As a senior, threw for 2,395 yards and 22 touchdowns, and rushed for 982 yards and 15 touchdowns.

Trey Dunkelberger TE 6-3 240 ✪✪✪ Woodland Hills, CA Los Angeles Pierce College
Enrolled in January… Ranked the No. 11tight end and No. 59 prospect in Pennsylvania according to the 247Sports Composite... Caught seven passes for 163 yards and three touchdowns as a senior

Amir Ealey TE 6-4 236 ✪✪✪ Coatesville, PA Coatesville Area
Ranked the No. 34 tight end and No. 21 prospect in Pennsylvania according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 *Pennsylvania Football News* Class AAA All-State first-team.

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Daivon Ellison	CB	5-9	175	✪✪✪	Ramsey, NJ	Don Bosco Prep

Ranked the No. 138 cornerback and No. 34 prospect in New Jersey according to the 247Sports Composite…2014 all-metro, all-county and all-league … 2013 All-State second-team… Team captain as a senior.

Jordan Fredericks RB 5-11 195 ✪✪✪ Cedarhurst Lawrence
Ranked the No. 110 running back and No. 8 prospect in New York according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 Gatorade New York State Player of the Year … New York State Sportswriters Association Class A Player of the Year … 2014 All-State first-team selection.

Christopher Fredrick S 6-1 172 ✪✪✪ Ellenwood, GA Cedar Grove
Ranked the No. 95 safety and No. 135 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 Georgia Class AAA All-State first-team … 2014 all-region … Recorded 74 tackles, including six for loss, and four interceptions in 2014.

Brandon Ginnetti WDE 6-3 240 ✪✪✪ Hamden, CT Hamden Hall
Missed senior season due to injury…Will grayshirt and delay enrollment until January 2016.

Anthony Giudice DT 6-3 255 ✪✪✪ Avon, CT Avon Old Farms
Ranked the No. 115 defensive tackle and No. 12 prospect in Connecticut according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 All-New England selection … As a senior, recorded 63 tackles, including eight sacks and 11 for loss … All-league selection.

Troy Henderson Jr. OLB 6-1 215 ✪✪✪ Lakewood, OH St. Edward
Ranked the No. 67 outside linebacker and No. 46 prospect in Ohio according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 All-District first-team … As a senior, recorded 171 tackles, including 17 for loss and 5.5 sacks.

Sterling Hofrichter K 5-9 160 ✪✪ Seffner, FL Armwood
Ranked the No. 14 kicker and No. 318 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 Florida All-State Class 6A first-team … Ranked as the sixth-best kicker and ninth-best punter by Kohl's Kicking Camp.

Matt Keller LS 6-0 225 ✪✪ Millersville, PA Penn Manor
Enrolled in January… Ranked the No. 5 kicker and No. 70 prospect in Pennsylvania according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 Under Armour All-American and played in 2015 Under Armour All-American Game … 2014 Eastern Pennsylvania Football Big School first-team.

Tyrone Perkins RB 6-0 190 ✪✪✪ Locust Valley Friends Academy
Ranked the No. 74 running back and No. 5 prospect in New York according to the 247Sports Composite… Missed the 2014 season due to an ACL tear … In 2013, rushed for more than 1,000 yards and scored 24 touchdowns.

Jake Pickard WDE 6-6 231 ✪✪✪ Millburn, NJ Millburn
Ranked the No. 58 weakside defensive end and No. 26 prospect in New Jersey according to the 247Sports Composite… As a junior, recorded 70 total tackles and 2.5 sacks.

Qaadir Sheppard OLB 6-3 222 ✪✪✪ New Rochelle, NY Iona Preparatory School
Ranked the No. 58 inside linebacker and No. 4 prospect in New York according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 Class AA All-State … As a senior, recorded 12 sacks and five fumble recoveries at defensive end and caught 54 passes for 842 yards and 13 touchdowns at tight end.

Dontae Strickland ATH 5-11 180 ✪✪✪ Monmouth Junction, NJ South Brunswick
Ranked the No. 32 athlete and No. 11 prospect in New Jersey according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 NJ.com All-State … In 2014, rushed for 1,179 yards and scored 16 touchdowns … In 2013, rushed for 988 yards and scored 11 touchdowns.

Ted Taylor OLB 6-0 200 ✪✪✪ Dodge City, KS Dodge City C.C.
Ranked the No. 9 outside linebacker and No. 31 prospect in Kansas according to the 247Sports Composite.

Kielan Whitner CB 6-1 185 ✪✪ Lawrenceville, GA Mountain View
Ranked the No. 221 cornerback and No. 229 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 all-region … Participated in the 2013 AT&T Georgia Junior Bowl.

Kenterius Womack ATH 6-3 185 ✪✪✪ Luverne, AL Luverne
Ranked the No. 51 athlete and No. 24 prospect in Alabama according to the 247Sports Composite.

PLAYER PROFILE

Hunt Healthy, Ready to Turn Around SU

In one offseason, Terrel Hunt hopes to master a new offensive system while redefining his football identity from a run-first quarterback to a guy who has a strong pocket presence.

The redshirt senior quarterback, who suffered a fractured fibula five games into last season, returns to orchestrate a flexible, run-oriented offense rather than the shotgun-read system former offensive coordinator George McDonald implemented.

"Coach McDonald wanted us to run a different type of offense and, sadly, we didn't have the tools that we needed for that offense, so we kind of failed," Hunt said.

The Orange was among the nation's worst in scoring touchdowns en route to a 3-9 finish, though the offense was limited by a host of injuries that led to four quarterbacks and 10 offensive linemen seeing the field.

This spring, though, camaraderie among the unit was up, Hunt said. Offensive coordinator Tim Lester installed about 70 percent of his system, and the players feel more confident in the blocking schemes and consistency of the playbook.

Keys to success include strong play from the hybrid backs, as well as the ability to establish the running game early in contests.

"We're way further than we were last year; you could ask any player that," Hunt said. "Everybody knows their job. They do their job right. We know the plays."

As for his own game, Hunt hopes to thrive as a pocket passer rather than a bruising runner. His career touchdown-to-interception ratio is 11-to-12, but in the new system, he believes he'll benefit from the timing routes and more frequent long-ball opportunities.

After attending the Manning Passing Academy last offseason, Hunt spent a week training with quarterback guru George Whitfield Jr. in May.

Hunt said that having to watch games from the coaches' box last season helped him read and understand coverages better.

QB TERREL HUNT

Photo by Rich Barnes-USA TODAY Sports

Still, he knows his legs will remain a weapon in the Orange's offense. Hunt has rushed for 13 touchdowns in his career and will factor into the ground game once again. But for his sake and Syracuse's, it should be on designed bootlegs and option keepers rather than scrambles and broken plays.

"I want to be a pocket quarterback that just happens to run, like Russell Wilson," Hunt said. "I think of him as a dual-threat, but he's really a pocket quarterback that when things break down he can extend the play."

BEST AND BRIGHTEST

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

QB TERREL HUNT

For all the knocks on SU's redshirt senior — he hasn't proven to be a capable passer, he's coming off a broken leg, etc. — Hunt (6-3, 234) is still the best quarterback on the team's roster. ... He'll need to develop into a pocket passer with the ability to run if the Orange wants to return to postseason play. ... Has rushed for 13 touchdowns and passed for 11 over 14 career starts.

EMERGING STAR

LB ZAIRE FRANKLIN

With only a couple of starts to his name, the true sophomore will be starting at middle linebacker with no experienced players behind him on the depth chart. ... Franklin (6-0, 238) racked up 44 tackles, including five for loss, last season. ... He showed the savvy and instincts that have made him a favorite among the coaching staff and players. ... Picked SU over Pittsburgh, Arizona, Tulane and Temple, among others.

TOP NEWCOMER

RB DONTAE STRICKLAND

A speedy running back from New Jersey, Strickland (5-11, 180) is one of the Orange's most highly touted recruits and fills a position of need. ... Syracuse returns only two scholarship running backs in Devante McFarlane and George Morris II, so it's likely Strickland will be in the mix for carries right away. ... Turned down interest from Georgia late in the recruiting process.

Photos courtesy of Syracuse Athletics.

In the return game, Shafer has always liked to use running backs on kickoffs. Devante McFarlane and Ervin Philips have experience handling those duties.

Strong safety Ritchy Desir was the team's "safe" punt return option in the past two years. It's unclear who will fill his role, though shifty junior wide receiver Brisly Estime likely will continue to see some repetitions.

True freshman Matt Keller, an early enrollee, is expected to take over the long-snapper job.

SCHEDULE ANALYSIS

After taking on one of the toughest schedules in college football last season, Syracuse has an easier path to six wins in 2015. The Orange should have a reasonable chance to win three of its non-conference games (Rhode Island, Central Michigan, at South Florida) and four of its first five (at Wake Forest).

A road game at Virginia in Week 7 offers another strong opportunity for a team that failed to win a game after Oct. 18 in 2014.

Syracuse needs to pocket some wins before facing a three-week gauntlet (at Florida State, at Louisville, vs. Clemson from Oct. 31 to Nov. 14) that isn't likely to yield any victories.

— Stephen Bailey

VIRGINIA CAVALIERS

For more coverage of the Cavaliers, visit virginia.247Sports.com

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Steve Fairchild **DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR:** Jon Tenuta **STADIUM:** Scott Stadium: 61,500

CAVALIERS FIGHTING TO RETURN TO ACC RELEVANCE

After six losing seasons over the past seven years, Virginia fans are wondering if they dwell in the land that college football has forgotten.

The last five seasons belong to coach Mike London, whose program has fallen on hard times after he guided the Cavaliers to a Peach Bowl appearance in his second season. Since then, UVa has struggled with consistency at quarterback and lacked the big-play punch required to finish in the upper echelons of the ACC.

Despite a 5-7 record last season (3-5 in the conference), the Cavaliers showed enough improvement for London to avoid the chopping block. The season included an upset over ranked Louisville, and near misses against then Top-10 UCLA and at BYU before falling apart.

Now, is it bowl or bust for London?

The personable coach, who has maintained a high level of recruiting through the tough times, hasn't hesitated to tinker with staff, personnel and systems. Perhaps the most impactful change since last season was the hiring of assistant Chris Beatty from Wisconsin to help improve the Cavaliers' running game.

Beatty, who has a strong offensive background from the Badgers, West Virginia and Illinois, has blended with offensive coordinator Steve Fairchild in an attempt to add more oomph to the Wahoo attack.

London's desire is to feature a power running attack, and Beatty worked with Virginia's tailbacks in the spring, emphasizing the need to run downhill and focusing on gaining 4 yards first, then turning those runs into 14 yards and beyond.

OFFENSE

Virginia's coaching staff remained open-minded enough in the spring to elevate last year's backup quarterback Matt Johns to No. 1 on the depth chart heading into training camp, perhaps in attempt to make the offense more mobile.

Then, the quarterback decision became simpler.

Last year's primary starter, Greyson Lambert, announced his transfer in late May. He showed flashes of brilliance last season, but Johns is the better athlete and can extend plays with his mobility. Both struggled with consistency and accuracy, and now Virginia's coaches can turn their full attention to working with Johns in those areas.

Because the Cavaliers boast smallish tailbacks, they may be versatile enough to spread the offense more with Johns under center, where he can be more effective with play-action. His biggest challenge will be making better decisions on staying in the pocket as opposed to giving up on a play and scrambling for yardage.

After Lambert's transfer, Johns was the only scholarship quarterback on the roster. Nick Johns (no relation) arrives as a freshman for camp.

Taquan Mizzell was a five-star running back coming into the program, and Cavalier fans are still waiting for him to live up to his nickname "Smoke," for having a penchant for eluding would-be tacklers. He is being pushed by former walk-on Daniel Hamm, which might not be a good sign.

The addition of North Carolina transfer receiver T.J. Thorpe could pump life into an offense that was stale and lacked big-play capability a year ago. Thorpe is not only a threat to become a lethal receiver on deep and short routes, but he exhibited big-play potential as a runner during the spring.

"We didn't feel like we were as explosive as we wanted to be last year," said offensive coordinator Steve Fairchild. "We are trying to get as explosive as we can and get the ball deep, and T.J. is a big component to what we're doing."

Still, Virginia will primarily use its tight ends and fullbacks as blockers to open holes for its tailbacks.

The Cavaliers boast 10 offensive linemen with experience but questions linger about the line's ability to dominate and punch holes in opposing defenses. Three of those potential starters — Jay Whitmire (missed last season due to injury), Eric Smith and Sadiq Olanrewaju — missed portions of the spring with injuries.

"We need to establish a level of physical play and be consistent with it," said new offensive line coach Dave Borbely.

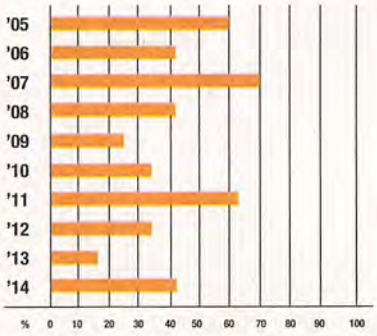
SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	'14 Record
Sept. 5	at UCLA	10-3
Sept. 12	NOTRE DAME	8-5
Sept. 19	WILLIAM & MARY	7-5
Sept. 25	BOISE STATE	12-2
Oct. 10	at Pittsburgh	6-7
Oct. 17	SYRACUSE	3-9
Oct. 24	at North Carolina	6-7
Oct. 31	GEORGIA TECH	11-3
Nov. 7	at Miami	6-7
Nov. 14	at Louisville	9-4
Nov. 21	DUKE	9-4
Nov. 28	VIRGINIA TECH	7-6

RESULTS

5-7, 3-5		
L	UCLA	20-28
W	RICHMOND	45-13
W	LOUISVILLE	23-21
L	at BYU	33-41
W	KENT STATE	45-13
W	PITTSBURGH	24-19
L	at Duke	13-20
L	NORTH CAROLINA	27-28
L	at Georgia Tech	10-35
L	at Florida State	20-34
W	MIAMI	30-13
L	at Virginia Tech	20-24

10-YEAR WINNING TREND



AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:
Charlottesville, Va.

2014:
5-7 overall, 3-5 ACC (T-5th, Coastal)

COACH:
Mike London — At Virginia: 23-38, 5 years; overall: 47-43, 7 years

RETURNING STARTERS:
8; 3 offense, 4 defense, kicker

PLAYERS TO WATCH:
QB Matt Johns, RB Taquan Mizzell, WR T.J. Thorpe, WR Canaan Severin, DE Mike Moore, DT Donte Wilkins, CB Maurice Canady, S Quin Blanding

PRIMARY STRENGTHS:
Virginia's offensive line is deep and experienced, which should help new starting quarterback Johns find an experienced receiving corps. The Cavaliers are experienced on the defensive line and in the secondary.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS:
London is determined to feature a power running game, but the running backs haven't proven they're capable. Virginia's quarterbacks struggled with consistency and accuracy last season. The entire starting linebacking corps is gone, and questions abound about where the pass rush will come from for the Cavs.

KEY LOSSES:
TB Kevin Parks, DE Eli Harold, LB Henry Coley, LB Max Valles, LB Daquan Romero, DB Anthony Harris

OVERVIEW:
London is counting on an experienced quarterback, a deep offensive line, and the playmaking ability of Thorpe to provide more scoring. Meanwhile, London is hoping Tenuta's aggressive defensive approach can continue to create havoc on opposing passers. Virginia must overcome a challenging start to the season, with three of its first four games against UCLA, Notre Dame and Boise State, before taking on a difficult ACC schedule as the Cavs try to get back to a bowl game.

KEY NUMBER:
97 Virginia's national rank in rushing last season (137.8 yards per game). When the entire foundation of a program is built around a power running attack, those numbers aren't going to get it done.

FS
Quin BLANDING

Photo by Joe Robbins

Photo by Don Kelly/SportPics

SCOUTING REPORT: Offense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
QB	Matt Johns	Jr.	Won job from incumbent in spring; no depth behind him.	Nick Johns, Fr.
RB	Taquan Mizzell	Jr.	Became more of a downhill runner in the spring.	Daniel Hamm, So.
FB	Connor Wingo-Reeves	Jr.	A powerful blocker who is there solely to open holes.	Vincent Croce, Sr.
WR	T.J. Thorpe	Sr.	Could be Virginia's answer for a big-time playmaker.	Andre Levrone, So.
WR	**Canaan Severin***	Sr.	Spectacular pass catcher and hardest worker on team.	Kyle Dockins, Jr.
TE	Rob Burns	Sr.	Key role as a blocker in Cavaliers' running game.	Evan Butts, Fr.
LT	Sadiq Olanrewaju	Jr.	Missed spring with injuries; had two starts last season.	Michael Mooney, Jr.
LG	Ryan Doull	Jr.	Got on-the-job training last season, should be better.	John Pond, Sr.
C	Jackson Matteo	Jr.	Has experience and must step up as projected starter.	Eric Tetlow, So.
RG	**Ross Burbank***	Sr.	Has played multiple positions on line; leader of the pack.	Sean Karl, Jr.
RT	**Eric Smith***	Jr.	Has started since late in his freshman season.	Jay Whitmire, Sr.
PK	**Ian Frye***	Sr.	Returning starter with good distance and accuracy.	Dylan Sims, Jr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

SCOUTING REPORT: Defense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
DE	Kwontie Moore	Sr.	Has big shoes to fill for departed pass rusher Eli Harold.	Darrious Carter, Fr.
DT	**David Dean***	Sr.	Most underrated guy on defense; great run-stopper.	Andre Miles-Redmond, Jr.
DT	Donte Wilkins	Jr.	Lots of experience and bullish figure on D-line.	Andrew Brown, So.
DE	**Mike Moore***	Sr.	Has NFL body, and it's his time to shine.	Trent Corney, Sr.
LB	Mark Hall	Jr.	Could be one of keys in Jon Tenuta's pass rush.	Malcolm Cook, So.
LB	Micah Kiser	So.	Big challenge to step into Cavs' traditionally tough MLB spot.	Caanan Brown, Fr.
LB	Zach Bradshaw	Jr.	Came on strong in spring; has on-the-job experience.	C.J. Stalker, Fr.
CB	**Maurice Canady***	Sr.	Virginia's best corner last season; loads of experience.	Demetrious Nicholson, Sr.
CB	Tim Harris	Jr.	Lost at times last season; faces pressure to improve.	Divante Walker, Jr.
SS	Kelvin Rainey	Jr.	Impressed coaches in spring drills, good upside.	Wilfred Wahee, Jr.
FS	**Quin Blanding***	So.	This kid has All-American written all over him.	Mason Thomas, Sr.
P	Nicholas Conte	Jr.	Big leg, but must develop consistency.	James Coleman, Jr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

DEFENSE

Jon Tenuta's defense has carved out a reputation as one of the most aggressive in college football. Certainly, 2014 was a prime example of the veteran's philosophy.

The Cavaliers finished among the nation's top 32 in rushing defense, total defense and scoring defense, and they were No. 53 in red zone defense. UVa was 20th in sacks (2.83 per game). Those numbers were a factor of aggression.

Problem is, all three of Virginia's starting linebackers, plus its pass-rushing defensive end, are gone. Senior linebackers Henry Coley and Daquan Romero graduated, while outside rush linebacker Max Valles, only a sophomore, elected to turn pro early. So, too, did junior rush end Eli Harold, leaving the cupboard bare of players adept at terrorizing quarterbacks.

Those four players accounted for 23 of UVa's 30 unassisted sacks and 41 of its 65 tackles for loss last season. Also gone is the secondary's most experienced player and interceptions leader, Anthony Harris.

"It's going to be a challenge," said linebackers coach Mike Archer of breaking in new starters at all three levels. "Depth is a concern. Some of the guys that will get on the plane to UCLA were at their proms in May."

Most promising is blue-chipper C.J. Stalker, who enrolled in January to get a jump start into the system, but missed part of spring ball due to an injury. Fundamentally strong, Stalker said he is determined to start in the season opener.

The Cavaliers are strong and deep up front with the Moores — Kwontie and Mike (no relation) — anchoring Tenuta's 4-3 scheme. Big, aggressive defensive tackles David Dean, Donte Wilkins and Andrew Brown provide plenty of beef in the middle.

UVa's secondary has experience at the corners with seniors Maurice Canady and Demetrious Nicholson (coming back after injury), plus junior Tim Harris, but opposing passers picked on those corners most of last season. The secondary is bolstered by sophomore Quin Blanding, who seems destined to become the Cavaliers' next great defensive star and a potential All-American.

"We're always going to be aggressive," Archer said. "How we do it might be different because we don't have the same personnel. We have to build it around the guys we have."

SPECIAL TEAMS

The Cavaliers boast one of the nation's top place-kickers in senior Ian Frye, a 2014 Lou Groza Award semifinalist who earned second-team All-ACC honors. Frye ended last season ranked second in the conference and sixth nationally with 22 field goals, including UVa's third-longest, game-winning field goal in history — a 42-yarder that beat No. 21 Louisville.

Frye's five misses were from 46 to 53 yards, and he booted a career-high four field goals at No. 21 BYU, including a 46-yarder in the second half after knowing

NOTEBOOK

Virginia reshuffled its coaching staff after **Tom O'Brien**, the associate head coach of offense retired, and offensive line coach **Steve Wachenheim** became head coach at VMI.

Coach **Mike London** lured **Chris Beatty** from Wisconsin to become UVa's assistant head coach and running backs coach. Beatty brought a wealth of offensive experience with him, having coached the Badgers' wide receivers the past two seasons. He also has served as a co-offensive coordinator at Illinois and running backs and slot receivers coach at West Virginia.

London also hired a familiar face in offensive line coach **Dave Borbely**, who once held that same position with the Cavaliers under **Al Groh**. Borbely has extensive experience at Louisville, Notre Dame and Colorado among other FBS schools.

Meanwhile, **Larry Lewis** moved from coaching running backs to tight ends; **Mike Archer** shifted to linebackers, while defensive coordinator **Jon Tenuta** took over the safeties. **Chip West** remained with the corners.

• Virginia decided to run the majority of its offense this spring with the quarterback taking snaps under center rather than in the shotgun, a switch from last season.

"We did that two years ago and **Kevin Parks** ran for over 1,000 yards," said offensive coordinator **Steve Fairchild**. "Last season we got away from it and became a little finessed. It lends itself well to play-action on first and second down, and helps our fullback and tailback, which opens up more run possibilities."

• When defensive end **Eli Harold** was drafted in the third round by the San Francisco 49ers and outside linebacker **Max Valles** was picked by the Raiders in the sixth round, it marked the 32nd consecutive year that at least one Cavalier player was selected in the NFL Draft.

• Stanford tight end **Charlie Hopkins** transferred to Virginia for his final year of football eligibility. Hopkins played in three games last season, and in all 14 games for the Cardinal in 2013, catching two passes that season.

• RB **Albert Reid**, expected to graduate from Maryland in July, announced in early June he will transfer to Virginia, where he will have two seasons of eligibility. He has 447 career rushing yards.

CAVALIERS SPRING ROSTER

Quarterbacks	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
15 Matt Johns	QB	6-5	210	Jr.	Chalfont, PA
18 Andrew Mackay	QB	6-2	200	So.	Fairfax
7 Joe Spaziani	QB	6-2	215	Fr.	Hingham, MA
Running Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
26 Anthony Calloway	RB	5-8	155	So.	Lynchburg
10 Jordan Ellis	RB	5-11	220	Fr.	Suwanee, GA
22 Daniel Hamm	RB	5-10	190	So.	Wytheville
4 Taquan Mizzell	RB	5-10	200	Jr.	Virginia Beach
30 LaChaston Smith	RB	6-0	225	Jr.	Statesville, NC
47 Vincent Croce	FB	6-4	270	Sr.	Olney, MD
41 Connor Wingo-Reeves	FB	6-3	235	Jr.	Midlothian
Wide Receivers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
81 Jamall Brown	WR	6-0	205	Jr.	Hampton
87 Kyle Dockins	WR	6-3	220	Jr.	Virginia Beach
19 Doni Dowling	WR	6-1	215	So.	Richmond
83 Ben Hogg	WR	6-0	170	Fr.	Lynchburg
85 Keeon Johnson	WR	6-3	210	Jr.	Kannapolis, NC
5 Jamil Kamara	WR	6-2	210	So.	Virginia Beach
14 Andre Levrone	WR	6-2	210	So.	Laurel, MD
23 Umar Muhammad-Wyatt	WR	6-1	205	Fr.	Hampton
88 Ryan Santoro	WR	6-2	215	So.	Oak Hill
9 Canaan Severin	WR	6-2	215	Sr.	Marlborough, MA
2 Dominique Terrell	WR	5-11	180	Sr.	Manassas
8 T.J. Thorpe	WR	6-0	210	Sr.	Durham, NC
37 Braedon Urie	WR	5-10	170	Fr.	Purcellville
Tight Ends	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
89 Rob Burns	TE	6-7	260	Sr.	Ashburn
45 Evan Butts	TE	6-4	240	Fr.	Newtown Square, PA
84 Ross Gardner	TE	6-3	220	Fr.	Mechanicsville
Charlie Hopkins	TE	6-6	260	Sr.	Spokane, WA
16 Brendan Marshall	TE	6-5	245	So.	Gaithersburg, MD
Offensive Linemen	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
70 Steven Moss	OL	6-4	290	Fr.	Fredericksburg
52 Grant Polk	OL	6-6	290	Fr.	Punta Gorda, FL
67 Jack English	OT	6-5	290	So.	Richmond
64 Jake Fieler	OT	6-5	300	Fr.	Parkersburg, WV
76 Michael Mooney	OT	6-6	290	Jr.	Malvern, PA
75 Sadiq Olanrewaju	OT	6-6	290	Jr.	Gaithersburg, MD
72 Eric Smith	OT	6-5	305	Jr.	Decatur, GA
77 Jay Whitmire	OT	6-6	300	Sr.	Alexandria
65 Ross Burbank	OG	6-4	300	Sr.	Virginia Beach
63 Ryan Doull	OG	6-5	300	Jr.	Kanata, Ontario
62 Sean Karl	OG	6-6	305	Jr.	Manorville, NY
71 Jack McDonald	OG	6-5	290	So.	Quincy, MA
50 Jackson Matteo	C	6-5	295	Jr.	Ashburn
60 John Pond	C	6-3	320	Sr.	Chester
68 Eric Tetlow	C	6-6	315	So.	Richmond
Defensive Linemen	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
99 Darrious Carter	DL	6-5	235	Fr.	Indiana, PA
98 Jordan Jackson	DL	6-4	215	Fr.	Purcellville
79 Jack Babcock	DT	6-3	260	So.	Glen Allen
9 Andrew Brown	DT	6-4	290	So.	Chesapeake
55 David Dean	DT	6-1	295	Sr.	Virginia Beach
56 Andre Miles-Redmond	DT	6-4	285	Jr.	Richmond
93 Donte Wilkins	DT	6-2	300	Jr.	Woodbridge
90 Michael Biesemier	DE	6-4	265	Fr.	Lynchburg
43 Trent Corney	DE	6-3	250	Sr.	Brockville, Ontario
34 Kwontie Moore	DE	6-2	290	Sr.	Norfolk
32 Mike Moore	DE	6-4	275	Sr.	Hyattsville, MD
Linebackers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
52 Caanan Brown	LB	6-3	230	Fr.	Clearwater, FL
54 Cory Jones	LB	6-5	205	Fr.	Washington, DC
31 Chris Peace	LB	6-3	240	Fr.	Newport News
15 C.J. Stalker	LB	6-2	225	Fr.	West Chester, OH
51 Zach Bradshaw	OLB	6-3	230	Jr.	Damascus, MD
59 Mark Hall	OLB	6-2	240	Jr.	Virginia Beach
47 Tucker Gamble	MLB	6-1	230	Fr.	Weston, FL
41 Michael Guerci	MLB	6-2	220	Fr.	Franklin Lakes, NJ
53 Micah Kiser	MLB	6-2	245	So.	Baltimore, MD
Defensive Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
26 Maurice Canady	CB	6-2	185	Sr.	Richmond
2 Kirk Garner	CB	5-11	180	So.	Baltimore, MD
5 Tim Harris	CB	6-2	200	Jr.	Richmond
39 Darious Latimore	CB	6-0	165	Fr.	Lawrenceville, GA
1 Demetrious Nicholson	CB	5-11	185	Sr.	Virginia Beach
11 Divante Walker	CB	5-11	175	Jr.	Virginia Beach
3 Quin Blanding	S	6-1	215	So.	Virginia Beach
33 Cordel Nelson	S	5-11	180	Fr.	Tacoma, WA
28 Wilfred Wahee	FS	5-11	200	Jr.	Norfolk
27 Malcolm Cook	SS	6-1	210	So.	Richmond
38 Kelvin Rainey	SS	6-1	200	Jr.	Houston, TX
16 Mason Thomas	SS	6-0	200	Sr.	Virginia Beach
Specialists	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
14 Ian Frye	PK	6-6	215	Sr.	Bristol
91 Dylan Sims	PK	6-0	190	Jr.	Lynchburg
93 Lester Coleman	K	6-5	225	Fr.	Martinsville
92 Andrew King	K	5-10	175	Fr.	Raleigh, NC
32 James Coleman	P	6-2	200	Jr.	Martinsville
38 Nicholas Conte	P	6-3	225	Jr.	Roanoke
66 Jeb Byrne	LS	6-3	210	Sr.	McLean
42 Tyler Shirley	LS	6-3	220	So.	Midlothian

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	25.8	85
Rushing	137.8	97
Passing	236.4	57
Total	374.2	87

DEFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	24.1	32
Rushing	120.7	18
Passing	232.5	72
Total	353.2	28

TO MARGIN	PER GAME	RANK
+ 5	+ 0.42	36

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	GP	Effic	Cmp	Att	Int	Pct	Yards	TD	Long	Avg/G
G. Lambert	9	115.7	154	261	11	59.0	1632	10	54	181.3
M. Johns	12	122.5	89	162	5	54.9	1109	8	45	92.4

RECEIVING

NAME	GP	No.	Yards	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
C, Severin	12	42	578	13.8	5	32	48.2
T. Mizzell	12	39	271	6.9	0	54	22.6
K. Parks	12	30	179	6.0	2	21	14.9

RUSHING

NAME	GP	Att.	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
K. Parks	12	189	781	36	745	3.9	4	48	62.1
K. Shepherd	12	84	359	11	348	4.1	2	28	29.0
T. Mizzell	12	64	281	1	280	4.4	2	16	23.3

DEF. LEADERS

Tackles: Q. Blanding 123, A. Harris 108, D. Romero 86
Tackles for loss: E. Harold 14.5, H. Coley 12.5, M. Valles 12.5
Sacks: M. Valles 9, H. Coley 8, E. Harold 7
Interceptions: Q. Blanding 3, M. Canady 3, A. Harris 2

247SPORTS CAVALIERS RECRUITING 2015

3 NEWCOMERS OF IMPACT

Jahvoni Simmons
One of the top inside backers in the talent-rich Tidewater region. Simmons plays downhill and laterally and can help in the run defense. He played for state champion Virginia Beach (Va.) Ocean Lakes.

Nick Johns
A pro-style guy with a big arm. Johns has a talented pedigree out of Washington (D.C.) Gonzaga and will be groomed to be the heir apparent to Matt Johns down the road.

Dominic Sheppard
A big back with ideal size for the position. He joined the Cavaliers late after a summer commit to Wisconsin, following his area recruiter Chris Beatty to the ACC.

SLEEPER

Steven Wright
A big, physical defensive end out of south Georgia with upside. Wright provides length and pass-rushing ability with tons of raw potential. In a few years he could be a starting contributor.

2016 NEEDS

The Cavaliers continue to try to build amongst the pressure of Mike London being on the hot seat. They'll try to continue to attempt to get the best student-athletes with size that they can under that unique situation. The Cavaliers need to find a franchise quarterback, a big back and any and all team speed they can.

— Ryan Bartow

247SPORTS COMPOSITE

0	1	22	0
✪✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪	✪✪

Commitments	23
Average Stars	3.04
Total Stars	70
National Rank: 49	ACC: 9

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Naji Abdullah	WDE	6-5	220	✪✪✪	Jacksonville, FL	Sandalwood
Ranked as the nation's No. 94 weakside defensive end and No. 287 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 40 tackles, eight sacks and five pass breakups as a senior.						
Ryan Bischoff	OG	6-4	290	✪✪✪	Plymouth Meeting, PA	Plymouth-Whitemarsh
Ranked as the nation's No. 92 offensive guard and No. 34 prospect in Pennsylvania according to the 247Sports Composite… Three-year starter on the offensive line ... First-team All-Eastern Pennsylvania.						
Richard Burney	TE	6-5	235	✪✪✪	Chesapeake	Hickory
Ranked as the nation's No. 62 tight end and No. 49 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite… All-Conference 10 first-team honoree at tight end in 2013 and 2014.						
Tanner Cowley	WDE	6-5	210	✪✪✪	Manasquan, NJ	Manasquan
Ranked as the nation's No. 63 weakside defensive end and No. 28 prospect in New Jersey according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 20 catches and six touchdowns at tight end ... Also plays baseball.						
Warren Craft	WR	6-2	170	✪✪✪	Roanoke	William Fleming
Ranked as the nation's No. 155 wide receiver and No. 42 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite… Caught 42 passes for 833 yards and eight touchdowns in 2014…Played football for first time in 2013.						
David Eldridge	WR	6-1	165	✪✪✪	Nokesville	Kettle Run
Ranked as the nation's No. 95 wide receiver and No. 26 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 45 receptions for 708 yards and three touchdowns in 2014… Named first-team All-Region 3A West.						
Eric Gallon	OLB	6-2	220	✪✪✪	Lakeland, FL	Lakeland Christian School
Ranked as the nation's No. 109 outside linebacker and No. 228 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 96 tackles, four sacks and one interception in 2014.						
Kareem Gibson	CB	5-10	157	✪✪✪	Johnstown, PA	Greater Johnstown Shs
Ranked as the nation's No. 134 cornerback and No. 33 prospect in Pennsylvania according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded 23 tackles and one interception in 2014.						
T.J. Griffin	CB	5-9	180	✪✪✪	Virginia Beach	Ocean Lakes
Ranked as the nation's No. 103 cornerback and No. 39 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 49 tackles, two interceptions and broke up nine passes in 2014 to help Ocean Lakes to a 15-0 record and the school's first state championship.						
Eli Hanback	OG	6-4	275	✪✪✪	Ashland	Patrick Henry
Ranked as the nation's No. 110 offensive guard and No. 56 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite… Team captain as a junior and senior ... First-team all-conference as a junior and senior.						
Nick Johns	QB	6-3	215	✪✪✪	Washington, DC	Gonzaga
Ranked as the nation's No. 24 pro-style quarterback and No. 7 prospect in D.C. according to the 247Sports Composite… Completed 66 percent (101 of 155) of his passes for 1,366 yards and 12 touchdowns... Played in the Offense-Defensive Senior Bowl.						
Gladimir Paul	WDE	6-3	210	✪✪✪	Philadelphia, PA	Delaware Valley-Northeast
Ranked as the nation's No. 79 weakside defensive end and No. 39 prospect in Pennsylvania according to the 247Sports Composite… Named All-Public League two years in a row ... Finished junior season with 21 sacks, the most in the Philadelphia Public League.						

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Grant Polk	OT	6-6	285	✪✪✪	Punta Gorda, FL	Charlotte
Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 100 offensive tackle and No. 128 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Named an Associated Press first-team all-state 7A.						
RJ Proctor	OT	6-4	308	✪✪✪	Bealeton	Liberty
Ranked as the nation's No. 168 offensive tackle and No. 52 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite… Helped the Liberty High School rushing attack tally 4,788 rushing yards for a school record 342 rushing yards per game ... Was a 2014 first-team all-state honoree.						
Myles Robinson	CB	5-11	185	✪✪✪	Olney, MD	Good Counsel
Ranked as the nation's No. 104 cornerback and No. 28 prospect in Maryland according to the 247Sports Composite… Played in the 2014 Maryland National Guard Crab Bowl.						
Christopher Sharp	OLB	6-1	195	✪✪✪	Princeton, NJ	Hun School
Ranked as the nation's No. 94 outside linebacker and No. 32 prospect in New Jersey according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 MAPL Conference Offensive Player of the Year ... Led the conference with 1,085 rushing yards on 81 carries and 19 rushing touchdowns.						
Dominic Sheppard	OLB	6-2	225	✪✪✪	Miami, FL	Gulliver Prep
Ranked as the nation's No. 46 outside linebacker and No. 89 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Semper Fidelis All-American… Class 4A second-team all-state team at linebacker.						
Jahvoni Simmons	ILB	6-1	225	✪✪✪✪	Virginia Beach	Ocean Lakes
Under Armour All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 150 prospect overall, No. 4 inside linebacker and No. 7 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 73 tackles and three interceptions as a senior.						
CJ Stalker	ILB	6-3	226	✪✪✪	West Chester, OH	Lakota West
Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 15 inside linebacker and No. 27 prospect in Ohio according to the 247Sports Composite… AP first-team all-state… Owns school record for tackles in a season (139) and is second in career tackles.						
Juan Thornhill	ATH	6-2	175	✪✪✪	Altavista	Altavista
Ranked as the nation's No. 53 athlete and No. 23 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite… First-team VHSL all-state defense ... Also plays basketball and scored over 1,000 career points.						
James Trucilla	DT	6-2	265	✪✪✪	Erie, PA	Cathedral Prep
Ranked as the nation's No. 68 defensive tackle and No. 25 prospect in Pennsylvania according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 40 tackles, 18 tackles for loss and 6.0 sacks in 2014 ... First-team all-state Class AAA.						
Steven Wright	WDE	6-4	235	✪✪✪	Waycross, GA	Ware County
Ranked as the nation's No. 60 weakside defensive end and No. 132 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded 21 tackles and 3.0 sacks in 2014 ... First-team All-Region 3-AAAAA.						
Olamide Zaccheaus	ATH	5-9	180	✪✪✪	Philadelphia, PA	St. Joseph's
Ranked as the nation's No. 61 athlete and No. 16 prospect in Pennsylvania according to the 247Sports Composite… Racked up 683 total rushing yards and nine rushing touchdowns in 2014 while averaging 7.0 yards per carry.						

PLAYER PROFILE

Dynamic Thorpe Brings Veteran Presence

Virginia is hoping that former rival T.J. Thorpe can be the X-factor the Cavaliers' offense has been missing for the past two seasons.

Thorpe, who was a dynamic wide receiver and dangerous kick returner for North Carolina, graduated in December and decided to spend his final year of eligibility with Virginia. The first time Thorpe showed up for a meeting at his new football home, coach Mike London was immediately impressed.

"When T.J. came in, he got on the chalkboard with (offensive coordinator Steve Fairchild) and he drew up all the routes of the rest of the receivers. He knew the protections of the offensive linemen, he knew the hot reads of the quarterbacks, and he knew the blocking schemes for the running backs," London said.

"That's what a veteran player does for you. His value is not only on the field, but off the field and in the locker room."

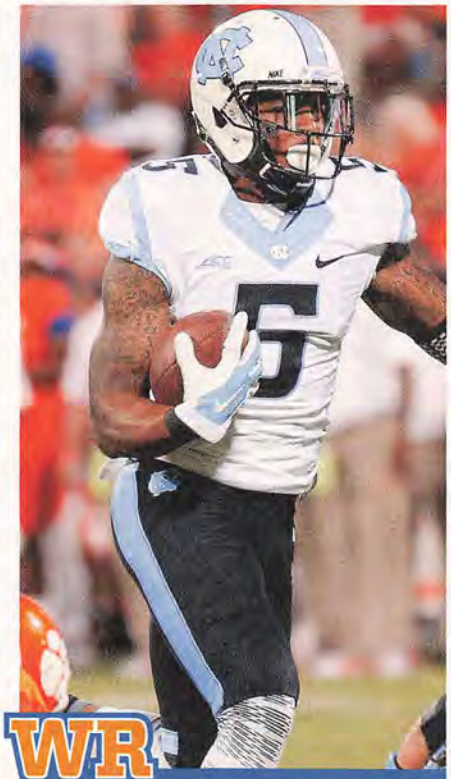
Thorpe was a dynamic performer throughout spring drills and made a strong impression in the opening series of the spring game.

The first time he touched the ball, he bolted 47 yards around right end on a jet sweep, followed two plays later with a 21-yard reception. He then capped the drive with a 12-yard touchdown catch. Three plays, 79 yards and a TD.

"That was the first time I put on the orange, so I felt a little bright," Thorpe said of UVa's uniforms. "I feel like I can make it look pretty good sometimes."

He had 42 career receptions for 574 yards and five TDs at UNC, and he led the ACC with a 26.7-yard average on kick returns in 2011, breaking Carolina's school record for kick return yards (960) before he was plagued with foot injuries.

"We talk about taking the top off a defense, T.J. can stretch the field vertically," London said. "We're going to find ways to get him the ball."



WR T.J. THORPE

Photo by Kyle Okita Cal Sport Media via AP Images

Fairchild likes what Thorpe adds to the offense — explosiveness, a work ethic, willingness to block, ability to run the ball as well as catch it. His yardage after catches could be a key this season.

Before the spring game, the last time he visited Scott Stadium was in October, when he made a game-winning catch for UNC against Virginia.

"All that's in the past," Thorpe said. "I'll be wearing orange or another shade of blue for the rest of my touchdowns."

BEST AND BRIGHTEST

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

WR T.J. THORPE

Perhaps QB Matt Johns is the more logical choice here, but if this senior transfer from North Carolina can stay healthy, he should make Virginia's offense pop. ... His speed makes him the consistent deep threat the Cavaliers have been missing, and it should open up shorter routes for everybody. ... Thorpe is also a threat in the running game and is a potential game-breaker as a return specialist. ... Has dealt with multiple foot injuries in his career.

EMERGING STAR

FS QUIN BLANDING

Everybody's Freshman All-American, Blanding has the toughness and smarts to become Virginia's next defensive star. ... The ACC Rookie of the Year became the first true freshman to start at safety for the Cavaliers since 1976. ... Finished No. 2 in the ACC and 12th nationally in tackles with 123, breaking Ahmad Brooks' freshman record at UVa. ... At 6-1, 215, he has great mobility and toughness. ... He won defensive coordinator Jon Tenuta's respect because "the kid studies football."

TOP NEWCOMER

LB C.J. STALKER

It didn't take long for the touted recruit out of Cincinnati to get noticed. ... After enrolling in January, the true freshman entered spring practice ranked No. 1 on the depth chart at weakside linebacker. ... The 6-2, 225 standout missed part of the spring with a lower-body injury but impressed the coaches enough to keep the door open for a starting role in the fall. ... Stalker plans to eventually attend medical school.

Photos courtesy of Virginia Athletics.

his father had suffered a heart attack in the stands in the first half.

Virginia will break in a new punter to replace Alec Vozenilek and his 42.5-yard average. Junior Nicholas Conte emerged from spring drills with the job. He has a strong leg, but lacked consistency.

UNC transfer T.J. Thorpe could supply plenty of fireworks as a kick returner after breaking the Tar Heels' record as a freshman prior to suffering foot injuries that hampered his final seasons there.

SCHEDULE ANALYSIS

Perhaps the Cavaliers' biggest challenge will be to not lose confidence if they experience a rocky start against a formidable schedule.

Virginia opens with three home dates in the first four weeks, but two of those contests are against Notre Dame and Boise State. This will be the Fighting Irish's first visit to Charlottesville. The Cavaliers travel to UCLA for their season-opener.

In the first half of the schedule, UVa has winnable games against William & Mary, Pitt and Syracuse, but the second half is loaded with conference foes that all played in bowl games last season.

The Cavaliers close the season at home against two teams with which they haven't experienced much success — Duke (which has won three straight over UVa) and state rival Virginia Tech (which the Cavaliers haven't beaten since 2003 when they had Matt Schaub at quarterback).

— Jerry Ratcliffe

VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES

For more coverage of the Hokies, visit virginiatech.247Sports.com

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Scot Loeffler **DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR:** Bud Foster **STADIUM:** Lane Stadium: 65,632

PIECES IN PLACE TO MAKE RUN AT ACC TITLE GAME

Virginia Tech might finally have the pieces on offense to offer some support to its always-vaunted defense. And that could be enough to restore the Hokies to the status of conference title contender, especially playing in the ACC's ever-ripe-for-the-picking Coastal Division.

Tech returns 17 starters, along with a host of other players with game experience. It has depth issues on the offensive line, at wide receiver and at linebacker, but if it can avoid major injuries at any of those spots, 2015 could be the year Tech gets back to the level it was when it was winning 10 games a season every year from 2004-2011.

Quarterback Michael Brewer rushed through preseason preparations last season, hurriedly getting ready to start the opener after transferring from Texas Tech in the summer. This time around, Brewer — who started all 13 games last season — will have the benefit of a full spring and fall camp with offensive coordinator Scot Loeffler.

Brewer will have enough playmakers around him, including tight end Bucky Hodges and wide receivers Isaiah Ford and Cam Phillips. If the offensive line can be effective, the offense should take a major stride.

Defensively, Tech will be looking for big years from a number of players coming off injuries, including senior defensive tackle Luther Maddy and junior cornerback Kendall Fuller.

The Hokies will have a good idea where things stand from the get-go. They open by hosting national champion Ohio State. It might be too much to expect another upset of the Buckeyes — like last season in Columbus, where Tech handed OSU its only defeat of the season — but Lane Stadium definitely will be rocking.

OFFENSE

When he was hired before the 2013 season, coordinator Scot Loeffler pointed to 2015 as the year when the offense had a chance to really be something special. It's a put-up or shut-up season now for Loeffler and a unit that failed to score a point in regulation against Wake Forest last season.

The good news? The Hokies have the talent to put up ... points, that is.

Senior quarterback Michael Brewer, a transfer from Texas Tech, is back behind center for his second season with Loeffler and the Hokies. He's surrounded by more weapons than Virginia Tech has had in recent years.

Sophomore tight end Bucky Hodges can be split out wide to create matchup problems. He had 45 catches for 526 yards and seven touchdowns last season as a redshirt freshman. With Hodges, senior Ryan Malleck and sophomore Kalvin Cline, the Hokies plan to use a heavy dose of two-tight end sets this season.

The future of the Hokies' passing game looks good: Hodges and sophomore wide receivers Isaiah Ford and Cam Phillips all have the ability to beat defenses one-on-one, giving Tech a big-play element it has been lacking.

The running game, once something Tech was known for, showed signs of life last season before the tailback spot was decimated by injuries. The team's most promising young backs, Marshawn Williams (torn ACL in November) and Shai McKenzie (torn ACL in September, indefinite suspension) missed spring ball. But Tech has plenty of options at the position.

Senior J.C. Coleman came on at the end of last year, running for 468 yards over the team's last four games. He had 157 yards and a touchdown, earning Military Bowl MVP honors, in the win over Cincinnati.

The question, as always, will be the offensive line. But for the first time in years, this much-maligned unit went through spring practice with a set lineup, allowing the group to develop chemistry and cohesion.

Tech is breaking in a new center in sophomore Eric Gallo, but the rest of the unit all has previous starting experience. The Hokies have moved junior Jonathan McLaughlin from right tackle back to left tackle, where he played as a true freshman. He'll line up alongside sophomore Wyatt Teller, a returner at left guard.

Senior Wade Hansen, who walked on after transferring from a Division III college, is the starter at right tackle. Junior Augie Conte is back at right guard.

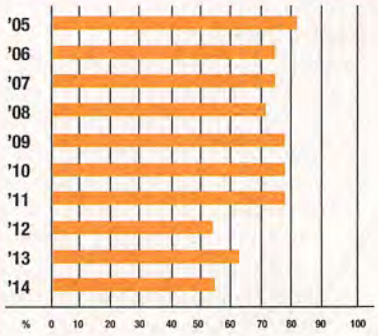
SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	'14 Record
Sept. 7	OHIO STATE	14-1
Sept. 12	FURMAN	3-9
Sept. 19	at Purdue	3-9
Sept. 26	at East Carolina	8-5
Oct. 3	PITTSBURGH	6-7
Oct. 9	NC STATE	8-5
Oct. 17	at Miami	6-7
Oct. 24	DUKE	9-4
Oct. 31	at Boston College	7-6
Nov. 12	at Georgia Tech	11-3
Nov. 21	NORTH CAROLINA	6-7
Nov. 28	at Virginia	5-7

RESULTS

7-6, 3-5		
W	WILLIAM & MARY	34-9
W	at Ohio State	35-21
L	EAST CAROLINA	21-28
L	GEORGIA TECH	24-27
W	WESTERN MICHIGAN	35-17
W	at North Carolina	34-17
L	at Pittsburgh	16-21
L	MIAMI	6-30
L	BOSTON COLLEGE	31-33
W	at Duke	17-16
L	at Wake Forest (2OT)	3-6
W	VIRGINIA	24-20
	Military Bowl	
W	vs. Cincinnati	33-17

10-YEAR WINNING TREND



AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:
Blacksburg, Va.

2014:
7-6 overall, 3-5 ACC (T-5th, Coastal)

COACH:
Frank Beamer — At Virginia Tech: 231-115-2, 28 years; overall: 273-138-4, 34 years

RETURNING STARTERS:
17; 8 offense, 7 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH:
QB Michael Brewer, WR Isaiah Ford, WR Cam Phillips, TE Bucky Hodges, DE Dadi Nicolas, DE Ken Ekanem, DT Luther Maddy, CB Kendall Fuller

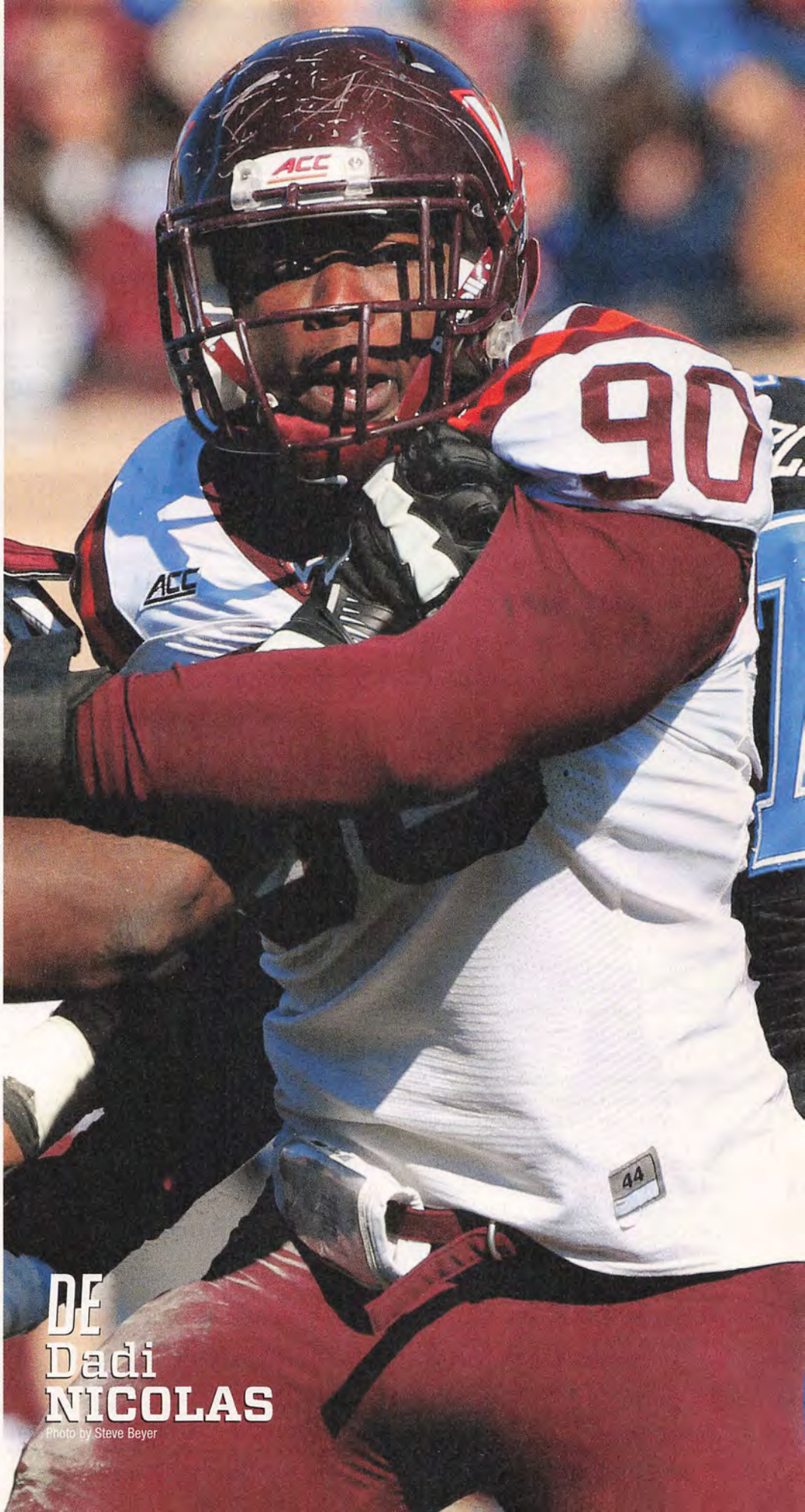
PRIMARY STRENGTHS:
The defense, as usual, figures to be the strength of the Hokies. But with a bevy of returning skill players, including Brewer, Tech has the potential for a vastly improved offense. Ford, Phillips and Hodges are good targets for Brewer, who should direct a balanced attack.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS:
The offensive line performed admirably in the spring, but until it does that in a game, it'll remain a question mark. Brewer has to cut down on the interceptions (15 last season). Defensively, Tech is replacing a pair of three-year starters at safety.

KEY LOSSES:
OL Laurence Gibson, OL David Wang, LB Chase Williams, S Kyshoen Jarrett, S Detrick Bonner

OVERVIEW:
Virginia Tech might finally have the offensive pieces in place to give its defense the support it needs to contend for the ACC title. A matchup with national champion Ohio State to open the season will draw the most headlines, but a relatively easy conference schedule may help the Hokies return to the league title game for the first time since 2011.

KEY NUMBER:
22 Consecutive years in which the Hokies have reached a bowl game under coach Frank Beamer, the winningest active coach in Division I. In two of its past three seasons, Tech had to win its regular-season finale against Virginia to keep that postseason streak alive.



DE
Dadi
NICOLAS
Photo by Steve Beyer

CB

KENDALL FULLER

Photo by Lee Coleman/Icon Sportswire

SCOUTING REPORT: Offense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
QB	**Michael Brewer***	Sr.	Transfer from Texas Tech started 13 games last season.	Brenden Motley, Jr.
RB	J.C. Coleman	Sr.	Earned MVP honors in the Hokies' Military Bowl win.	**T. Edmunds, Jr./M. Williams, So.***
FB	Sam Rogers	Jr.	Missed spring practice because of an elbow injury.	Jerome Wright, Jr.
WR	**Isaiah Ford***	So.	Led team last season with 56 catches for 709 yards.	Kevin Asante, Sr.
WR	**Cam Phillips***	So.	Had 40 catches for 498 yards as a rookie.	Demitri Knolwes, Sr.
TE	**Bucky Hodges***	So.	Will be used at tight end and split out wide.	Ryan Malleck, Sr.
LT	**Jonathan McLaughlin***	Jr.	Back on the left side after moving to right tackle in 2014.	Darius Redman, Sr.
LG	**Wyatt Teller***	So.	A year stronger and a year more experienced.	Alston Smith, Jr.
C	Eric Gallo	So.	Has impressed with his intelligence, athleticism.	Kyle Chung, So.
RG	**Augie Conte***	Jr.	Brings size and toughness to the front five.	Colt Pettit, Fr.
RT	Wade Hansen	Sr.	Transfer from Rensselaer Polytechnic earned scholarship in April.	Parker Osterloh, So.
K	**Joey Slye***	So.	Converted 20 of 28 fields goal attempts as a freshman.	Michael Santamaria, Fr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

SCOUTING REPORT: Defense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
DE	**Dadi Nicolas***	Sr.	Had nine sacks and team-high 18.5 tackles for loss in 2014.	Melvin Keihn, So.
DT	Luther Maddy	Sr.	Missed most of last season with a knee injury.	**Nigel Williams, Jr.***
DT	**Corey Marshall***	Sr.	Missed the spring following ankle surgery.	Woody Baron, Jr.
DE	**Ken Ekanem***	Jr.	Led team with 9.5 sacks last year. Had shoulder surgery.	Seth Dooley, So.
LB	**Deon Clarke***	Sr.	Top returning tackler with 74 stops last year.	Jamieon Moss, So.
LB	Andrew Motuapuaka	So.	Made four starts last year when Chase Williams was hurt.	Carson Lydon, Fr.
LB	Ronny Vandyke	Sr.	Now healthy, hoping for breakout senior season.	Holland Fisher, Fr.
CB	**Kendall Fuller***	Jr.	All-American missed spring ball with a wrist injury.	**Chuck Clark, Jr.***
CB	Brandon Facyson	So.	Missed most of last season with a leg injury.	Greg Stroman, So.
ROV	C.J. Reavis	So.	Hard hitter who impressed during spring drills.	Anthony Shegog, So.
FS	Donovan Riley	Sr.	Moved from cornerback in the spring.	Desmond Frye, Jr.
P	**A.J. Hughes***	Sr.	Missed spring practice with a back injury.	Mitchell Ludwig, Jr.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

DEFENSE

Assuming that the starters coming off injuries and offseason surgeries return full speed — and all signs are most of them will — Virginia Tech appears to boast one of the ACC's top defenses, yet again. Bud Foster signed a contract extension in the offseason, and the unit returns seven starters.

Up front, the Hokies went through spring without defensive tackles Luther Maddy (knee) and Corey Marshall (ankle), and defensive end Ken Ekanem (shoulder). All three are all-conference level talents. Senior defensive end Dadi Nicolas might be the defense's most dynamic player, and sophomore Seth Dooley emerged as a third option at end.

For the first time in a few years, Tech has depth inside at defensive tackle. Nigel Williams, Woody Baron and Ricky Walker handled that spot this spring, with Maddy and Marshall sidelined.

At linebacker, the Hokies lose senior Chase Williams. But sophomore Andrew Motuapuaka started four straight games last season when Williams was out with a knee injury, and Motuapuaka reached double digits in tackles in all of them, totaling 45 tackles in that four-game stretch.

If there's a question mark on the defense, it's the secondary, where the Hokies must replace a pair of three-year starters at safety in Kyshoen Jarrett and Detrick Bonner. Hard-hitting sophomore C.J. Reavis turned in a strong spring and is slated to start at rover. Senior Donovan Riley, a converted corner, and junior Desmond Frye ended spring competing for the free safety spot.

Tech's top two cornerbacks, junior Kendall Fuller (wrist) and sophomore Brandon Facyson (leg), sat out the spring with injuries. Fuller, a potential first-round NFL draft pick, is expected back full speed. There were some lingering questions about where Facyson will be in the fall, but progress, as of early June, was encouraging.

Facyson was a third-team All-ACC performer and a Freshman All-American in 2013, but he played in only the first three games of last season, able to get a medical redshirt to restore his year of eligibility.

If he isn't the player he was during that strong 2013 season, the Hokies could turn to Chuck Clark at that corner spot. If Facyson is back to form, Clark could factor in as the team's nickel back or win the job at free safety over Riley and Frye.

Clark took over for the injured Facyson last season and finished third on the team with 73 tackles.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Senior punter A.J. Hughes returns, though he sat out spring practice dealing with a back issue. He averaged 39.9 yards per attempt in 2014, the lowest mark in his three years punting for the Hokies. Sophomore Joey Slye, the starting placekicker last season, is competing with redshirt freshman Michael Santamaria to hold on to

NOTEBOOK

Backup quarterback **Andrew Ford** requested a release from his scholarship in mid-May with the intention of transferring.

Ford, who enrolled early in 2014 and redshirted last season as a freshman, was unable to crack the two-deep after two spring practices with the team. Ford, who was the 2013 Gatorade Player of the Year for the state of Pennsylvania, said in the spring he felt he had made progress.

"I feel a lot more comfortable with the speed of our game, with the offense," he said during spring ball. "I think I have our offense down. I think I'm in a position now where I can lead."

His departure won't leave the Hokies short.

In addition to having senior **Michael Brewer** and junior **Brenden Motley** as the 1-2 combination this season, Tech has redshirt freshman **Chris Durkin,** plus incoming freshman **Dwayne Lawson**, a 6-6 prospect from Tampa who was the No. 9-rated pro-style quarterback in the country, according to the 247Sports' Composite. Lawson originally had committed to Miami.

• **Bill Roth**, who was the radio voice for Virginia Tech football and men's basketball for 27 years, left this spring to handle the same duties for UCLA. "I've always been amazed how professional Bill Roth has been and how well he's served Virginia Tech," said coach **Frank Beamer**. "Wish him well."

• Virginia Tech allowed 34 sacks last season, tying for 98th nationally at 2.62 yielded per game. The 34 sacks were the most given up by the Hokies since opponents managed 42 in 2010.

Whether it was in pass protection or in run blocking, Tech's line looked improved and more cohesive in the spring. "I think we're getting tougher all the time, and better," Beamer said.

Sophomore center **Eric Gallo**, a new starter, is one to watch.

"How smart he is is something," said left tackle **Jonathan McLaughlin**. "That center position has to be the smartest guy on the line, and I feel like Gallo has definitely taken on that challenge."

• It was a quiet NFL Draft for Tech, with only two players selected. Safety **Kyshoen Jarrett** went early in the fifth round, and offensive lineman **Laurence Gibson** was taken in the seventh round, 243rd overall.

HOKIES SPRING ROSTER

Quarterbacks	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
12 Michael Brewer	QB	6-0	200	Sr.	Lake Travis, TX
16 Jack Click	QB	6-4	207	Fr.	Glen Allen
13 Chris Durkin	QB	6-4	242	Fr.	Poland, OH
9 Brenden Motley	QB	6-4	228	Jr.	Christiansburg
Running Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
4 J.C. Coleman	RB	5-7	190	Sr.	Chesapeake
14 Trey Edmunds	RB	6-1	225	Jr.	Danville
34 Travon McMillian	RB	6-0	194	Fr.	Woodbridge
48 D.J. Reid	RB	6-0	232	Fr.	Chester
42 Marshawn Williams	RB	5-11	220	So.	Hampton
19 Logan Adkins	FB	5-11	208	Fr.	Christiansburg
32 Steven Peoples	FB	5-9	214	Fr.	Galax
45 Sam Rogers	FB	5-10	220	Jr.	Mechanicsville
25 Jerome Wright	FB	6-2	231	Jr.	Richmond
36 Adonis Alexander	ROV	6-3	193	Fr.	Charlotte, NC
2 Donovan Riley	ROV	5-11	210	Sr.	Baltimore, MD
24 Anthony Shegog	ROV	6-2	212	So.	Stafford
Wide Receivers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
81 Kevin Asante	WR	6-0	189	Sr.	Charlotte, NC
39 Jaylen Bradshaw	WR	6-0	188	Fr.	Chesapeake
22 Michael Brainard	WR	6-0	189	Sr.	Clifton
15 Joel Caleb	WR	6-2	200	Jr.	Midlothian
23 Alden Carpenter	WR	6-1	187	So.	Leesburg
86 C.J. Carroll	WR	5-7	163	Fr.	Olney, MD
1 Isaiah Ford	WR	6-1	180	So.	Jacksonville, FL
3 Austin Jones	WR	6-2	193	Jr.	Mason, OH
80 Demitri Knowles	WR	6-1	177	Sr.	Freeport, Bahamas
83 Charley Meyer	WR	6-1	215	Jr.	Richmond
20 Deon Newsome	WR	5-11	186	So.	Hampton
5 Cam Phillips	WR	6-1	196	So.	Laurel, MD
38 David Prince	WR	6-1	180	So.	Roanoke
Tight Ends	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
82 Xavier Burke	TE	6-3	261	Fr.	Lawrenceville
89 Kalvin Cline	TE	6-4	245	So.	Boca Raton, FL
87 Matt Hill	TE	6-5	239	Fr.	Salem
7 Bucky Hodges	TE	6-6	249	So.	Virginia Beach
49 Dakota Jackson	TE	6-3	269	Jr.	Roanoke
88 Ryan Malleck	TE	6-5	245	Sr.	Point Pleasant, NJ
Offensive Linemen	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
61 Kyle Chung	OL	6-3	285	So.	Ponte Vedra Beach, FL
76 Austin Clark	OL	6-6	300	Fr.	Lexington
72 Augie Conte	OL	6-6	297	Jr.	Richmond
64 Eric Gallo	OL	6-2	293	So.	Richboro, PA
77 Wade Hansen	OL	6-5	300	Sr.	Troy, NY
71 Jonathan McLaughlin	OL	6-5	310	Jr.	Mauldin, SC
66 Billy Ray Mitchell	OL	6-3	284	Fr.	Westwood, NJ
63 Andrew Moras	OL	6-0	238	Fr.	Ridgewood, NJ
69 Yosuah Nijman	OL	6-7	265	Fr.	Maplewood, NJ
67 Parker Osterloh	OL	6-8	343	So.	Williamsburg
58 Colt Pettit	OL	6-3	291	Fr.	Deshler, OH
74 Braxton Pfaff	OL	6-5	304	Fr.	Lynchburg
52 Darius Redman	OL	6-4	285	Sr.	Washington, DC
68 Cody Rhodes	OL	6-4	285	Fr.	Pembroke
75 Alston Smith	OL	6-2	294	Jr.	Virginia Beach
79 Tyrell Smith	OL	6-4	280	Fr.	North Brunswick, NJ
57 Wyatt Teller	OL	6-6	295	So.	Bealeton
55 Jack Willenbrock	OL	6-3	247	Jr.	Glenmoore, PA
62 Andrew Williams	OL	6-0	275	So.	Daleville

Defensive Linemen	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
60 Woody Baron	DT	6-1	265	Jr.	Nashville, TN
92 Luther Maddy	DT	6-1	293	Sr.	Delray Beach, FL
96 Corey Marshall	DT	6-2	262	Sr.	North Dinwiddie
99 Vinny Mihota	DT	6-5	270	Fr.	Fredericksburg
89 Dalton Roe	DT	6-1	235	So.	Williamsburg
91 Steve Sobczak	DT	6-2	315	Fr.	Milford
98 Ricky Walker	DT	6-3	286	So.	Hampton
95 Nigel Williams	DT	6-2	288	Jr.	Richmond
87 Harry Boston	DE	6-1	224	Fr.	Oliver Springs, TN
43 Seth Dooley	DE	6-5	242	So.	Salem
4 Ken Ekanem	DE	6-3	243	Jr.	Centreville
97 Laird Gardner	DE	6-1	232	Sr.	Monroe Township, NJ
93 Jeremy Haynes	DE	6-3	221	Jr.	Lorton
8 Melvin Keihn	DE	6-1	211	So.	Towson, MD
90 Dadi Nicolas	DE	6-4	236	Sr.	Delray Beach, FL
Linebackers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
45 Drew Burns	LB	6-3	219	Jr.	Chesapeake
40 Deon Clarke	LB	6-2	213	Sr.	Richmond
48 Josh Eberly	LB	5-7	220	Jr.	Broadway
56 Sean Huelskamp	LB	6-1	202	So.	Centreville
44 Carson Lydon	LB	6-2	241	Fr.	Tarpon Springs, FL
18 Raymon Minor	LB	6-2	219	Fr.	Ashland
50 Jamieon Moss	LB	6-1	211	So.	Elizabeth City, NC
54 Andrew Motuapuaka	LB	6-0	223	So.	Virginia Beach
53 Trent Young	LB	5-10	218	Fr.	Richmond
29 Holland Fisher	OLB	6-1	180	Fr.	Richmond
38 Johnathan Galante	OLB	5-11	202	So.	Blacksburg
35 Quinton Taylor	OLB	6-1	220	Jr.	Chester
37 Ronny Vandyke	OLB	6-4	219	Sr.	Lorton
42 Mike Wandey	OLB	5-11	218	So.	Oak Hill
Defensive Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
12 Erikk Banks	CB	5-9	176	So.	Coeburn
39 Elisha Boyd	CB	6-0	175	Fr.	Newport News
19 Chuck Clark	CB	6-0	206	Jr.	Suffolk
22 Terrell Edmunds	CB	6-2	195	Fr.	Danville
31 Brandon Facyson	CB	6-2	184	So.	Newnan, GA
11 Kendall Fuller	CB	6-0	197	Jr.	Baltimore, MD
17 Shawn Payne	CB	6-2	191	Fr.	Chesterfield
13 Gahrul Reed	CB	5-9	156	Fr.	Greensboro, NC
6 Mook Reynolds	CB	6-0	172	Fr.	Greensboro, NC
3 Greg Stroman	CB	6-0	160	So.	Bristow
27 Curtis Williams	CB	5-10	170	So.	Amelia
26 Desmond Frye	FS	6-2	196	Jr.	Chester
23 Der'Woun Greene	FS	5-10	189	Jr.	Portsmouth
16 Greg Jones	FS	6-2	207	Jr.	Lorton
21 C.J. Reavis	FS	6-1	205	So.	Chester
2 Donovan Riley	FS	5-11	210	Sr.	Baltimore, MD
Specialists	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
2 Michael Santamaria	PK	5-9	168	Fr.	Athens, GA
46 Joey Slye	PK	5-10	221	So.	Stafford
90 Andrew Storms	PK	6-1	160	So.	Wytheville
35 Carson Wise	PK	5-9	160	Fr.	Blacksburg
37 Daniel Jones	K	6-1	195	So.	Concord, NC
27 A.J. Hughes	P	6-1	195	Sr.	Terre Haute, IN
30 Mitchell Ludwig	P	5-11	194	Jr.	Abingdon
18 Parker Walsh	P	6-0	175	So.	Roanoke
91 Joe Callas	LS	6-0	197	Fr.	Chantilly
59 Eddie D'Antuono	LS	6-6	262	Jr.	Alexandria
47 Chaska Moon	LS	6-0	237	Fr.	Wake Forest, NC
65 Colton Taylor	LS	6-0	212	So.	Salem

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	24.1	93
Rushing	147.9	86
Passing	217.4	75
Total	365.3	96

DEFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	20.2	14
Rushing	144.8	39
Passing	199.0	25
Total	343.8	21

TO MARGIN	PER GAME	RANK
- 4	- 0.31	T-89

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	GP	Effic	Cmp	Att	Int	Pct	Yards	TD	Long	Avg/G
M. Brewer	13	117.4	262	441	15	59.4	2692	18	50	207.1
M. Leal	3	175.2	6	9	0	66.7	77	1	15	25.7

RECEIVING

NAME	GP	No.	Yards	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
I. Ford	13	56	709	12.7	6	33	54.5
W. Byrn	13	47	388	8.3	0	44	29.8
B. Hodges	13	45	526	11.7	7	50	40.5

RUSHING

NAME	GP	Att.	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
J.C. Coleman	13	107	560	27	533	5.0	3	38	41.0
M. Williams	9	124	509	34	475	3.8	4	42	52.8
S. McKenzie	5	53	279	10	269	5.1	3	39	53.8

DEF. LEADERS

Tackles: K. Jarrett 88, D. Clarke 74, C. Clark 73
Tackles for loss: D. Nicolas 18.5, K. Ekanem 14.5, D. Clarke 11
Sacks: K. Ekanem 9.5, D. Nicolas 9, D. Clarke 5
Interceptions: K. Jarrett 3. K. Fuller 2, D. Riley 2

247SPORTS HOKIES RECRUITING 2015

3 NEWCOMERS OF IMPACT

Austin Clark
Bookend tackle with ideal size. Rugged edge blocker that can seal and provide a push in Tech's perimeter run game.

Mook Reynolds
Dynamic cover guy that will try and help carry on the position on the island for the Hokies. Comes from a winning program at Greensboro (N.C.) Northern Guillford and adds length and enthusiasm to the secondary.

Dwayne Lawson
Virginia Tech's potential QB of the future. Lawson is a pro-style guy with 6-6, 207-pound size. He has mobility and length — a need area for the Hokies.

SLEEPER

Harry Lewis
Out of powerhouse Hampton (Va.) Phoebus, Lewis is a hard-working, powerful grow-into defensive tackle — the type that has been the backbone of Virginia Tech's success in the ACC the last 15 years. Lewis already bench presses 400 pounds and brings a power element to the interior of the defensive line.

2016 NEEDS

The Hokies will look to oversign at defensive end in an effort to upgrade their pass-rush. They'll try to add several defensive backs, especially with a solid crop in-state. Virginia Tech also would like to add some speed to its offensive skill, both in the backfield and on the perimeter.

— Ryan Bartow

247SPORTS COMPOSITE

0	4	20	0
✪✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪	✪✪

Commitments	24
Average Stars	3.17
Total Stars	76
National Rank: 29	ACC: 5

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Adonis Alexander	S	6-3	193	✪✪✪	Charlotte, NC	Independence
Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 77 safety and No. 36 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite…A first-team all-state selection…Had 105 tackles and two interceptions as a senior.						
Jahque Alleyne	S	6-1	180	✪✪✪	Virginia Beach	Ocean Lakes
Ranked as the nation's No. 35 safety and No. 21 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite…Had 62 tackles and seven interceptions as a junior.						
Mike Arnold	OT	6-5	280	✪✪✪	Winter Haven, FL	Winter Haven Senior
Ranked as the nation's No. 89 offensive tackle and No. 109 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…First-team Florida All-State Class 6A selection as a senior.						
Xavier Burke	TE	6-3	261	✪✪✪	Fork Union	Fork Union Military Academy
Enrolled in January…Ranked as the No. 5 Prep School prospect…Originally signed with Virginia Tech out of Lawrenceville (Va.) Brunswick High in 2014.						
Austin Clark	OT	6-6	300	✪✪✪✪	Lexington	Rockbridge County
Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 282 prospect overall, No. 28 offensive tackle and No. 12 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite…First-team all-state selection.						
Chris Cunningham	TE	6-3	225	✪✪✪	Jacksonville, FL	Atlantic Coast
Ranked as the nation's No. 40 tight end and No. 155 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite…Led his team with 241 receiving yards and four touchdowns as a senior.						
Tremaine Edmunds	OLB	6-4	220	✪✪✪	Ringgold	Dan River
Ranked as the nation's No. 34 outside linebacker and No. 16 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite…Named first-team all-conference as a senior at linebacker and tight end, earning Defensive Back of the Year honors.						
Coleman Fox	RB	5-11	190	✪✪✪	Salem	Salem
Ranked as the nation's No. 99 running back and No. 40 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite…First-team all-state selection at running back.						
Darius Fullwood	WDE	6-4	240	✪✪✪	Olney, MD	Good Counsel
Ranked as the nation's No. 21 weakside defensive end and No. 11 prospect in Maryland according to the 247Sports Composite…Semper Fidelis All-American…All-USA Maryland Football Team selection.						
Houshun Gaines	SDE	6-4	220	✪✪✪	Rocky Mount, NC	Nash Central
Ranked as the nation's No. 57 strongside defensive end and No. 38 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 85 tackles, 21 tackles for a loss and 11.5 sacks as a junior…Selected to the Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas.						
Trevon Hill	WDE	6-4	220	✪✪✪	Virginia Beach	Salem
Ranked as the nation's No. 16 weakside defensive end and No. 15 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite…Earned all-state honors as a junior.						
Zachariah Hoyt	OC	6-5	275	✪✪✪	Salem	Salem
Ranked as the nation's No. 21 center and No. 51 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite…First-team all-state selection as a senior.						
DuWayne Johnson	CB	6-1	160	✪✪✪	Washington, DC	Woodson H.D.
Ranked as the nation's 64 cornerback and No. 8 prospect in D.C. according to the 247Sports Composite… 2014 American Family Insurance All-USA Washington D.C. Football Team selection.						

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Dwayne Lawson	QB	6-6	207	✪✪✪✪	Tampa, FL	Hillsborough
Semper Fidelis All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 214 prospect overall, No. 9 pro-style quarterback and No. 30 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Passed for 2,444 yards and 21 touchdowns and added another 867 rushing yards and 17 scores during his senior season.						
Harry Lewis	DT	6-2	260	✪✪✪	Hampton	Phoebus
Ranked as the nation's No. 50 defensive tackle and No. 29 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded 95 tackles and 15 sacks as a senior … Had 60 tackles and 11 sacks as a junior.						
Carson Lydon	OLB	6-2	241	✪✪✪	Tarpon Springs, FL	East Lake
Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 61 outside linebacker and No. 134 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Florida All-State Class 7A first-team selection as a senior.						
Deshawn McClease	RB	5-9	175	✪✪✪	Chesapeake	Oscar Smith
Ranked as the nation's No. 42 running back and No. 19 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite… First-team all-state selection …Rushed for a school-record 2,015 yards and 29 touchdowns as a senior.						
Yosuah Nijman	DT	6-6	265	✪✪✪✪	Fork Union	Fork Union Military Academy
Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 3 Prep School prospect according to the 247Sports Composite… Played in the Phil Simms North-South All-Star Game … State champion in the shot put.						
D'Andre Plantin	OT	6-5	277	✪✪✪	Norcross, GA	Norcross
Ranked as the nation's No. 136 offensive tackle and No. 133 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… A first-team all-region selection for 7-AAAAAA by the coaches as a senior.						
Mook Reynolds	CB	6-0	172	✪✪✪	Greensboro, NC	Northern Guilford
Enrolled in January…Semper Fidelis All-American… Ranked as the nation's No. 43 corner-back and No. 14 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 65 tackles and an interception as a senior.						
Tim Settle	DT	6-2	361	✪✪✪✪	Manassas	Stonewall Jackson
Under Armour All-American…Ranked as the nation's No. 101 prospect overall, No. 13 defen-sive tackle and No. 3 prospect in Virginia according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 72 tackles, 25 tackles for loss, three sacks, two fumble recoveries and 10 pass deflections as a senior.						
Tyrell Smith	OG	6-4	280	✪✪✪	Ashburnham, MA	Cushing Academy
Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 68 offensive guard and No. 3 prospect in New Jersey according to the 247Sports Composite… First-team all-state selection by the *Star-Ledger* following his senior season.						
Eric Whitehead	DT	6-1	300	✪✪✪	Indianapolis, IN	Arsenal Technical
Likely headed to junior college… Ranked as the nation's No. 55 defensive tackle and No. 15 prospect in Indiana according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 52 tackles as a junior, including 18 tackles for loss and eight sacks.						
Adonis Williamson	CB	6-1	190	✪✪✪	Indianapolis, IN	Arsenal Technical
Ranked as the nation's No. 59 cornerback and No. 9 prospect in Indiana according to the 247Sports Composite…Recorded 53 tackles and six interceptions (two returned for TDs) as a senior and had 49 tackles and seven interceptions as a junior.						

PLAYER PROFILE

No Longer Rushed, Brewer Settles in at QB

A year ago, Virginia Tech rushed Michael Brewer through fall camp, hurriedly preparing the Texas Tech transfer for the season opener. Brewer started all 13 games, leading Virginia Tech to a 7-6 record, including a road upset of eventual national champion Ohio State.

During spring practice, Brewer and offensive coordinator Scot Loeffler relished having a bit more time to work on some of the finer points of the game.

"It's very detailed work that we're putting in right now, and it's helping us understanding where everybody goes and why they're going certain places against certain defenses," Brewer said.

"It's helping us in the quarterback room to kind of understand why we're going certain places with the ball and when not to go certain places with the ball. And that's kind of something that we didn't really get to go into depth with last year, because we didn't have any time. It was just all about trying to learn formations and plays and get caught up to speed with these guys.

"Now we're able to slow things down and learn more and translate it to the practice field."

Brewer passed for 2,692 yards and 18 touchdowns last season, taking a beating behind a porous line, but he never missed a game.

Loeffler, in his third season as the Hokies' coordinator, pushed his quarterbacks, especially Brewer, hard during the offseason.

"It's been tough. It's been very intense," Brewer said. "Everything that we do is full speed. He's real big with urgency right now, attacking everything that we do with great detail."

Loeffler said that approach should pay dividends for Brewer and backup Brenden Motley.

"Understanding it inside and out, the details," Loeffler said.

"I think he had a hard time visualizing it. When you can't visualize it, you can't see it before you enter the field or the snap. You're generally a count late. You can't anticipate. And I'm putting pressure on those two, now. And I think they're buying into it. At times it's not easy in our room right now, and I like it that way. And I think they're responding real well."

And Brewer expects the extra coaching to translate to better performance.

"We didn't have a whole lot of time to do the little things that are important. And now we do," Brewer said. "I can kind of take a breath and learn for the first time since I've been here, really."

QB
MICHAEL BREWER
Photo by Steve Beyer

BEST AND BRIGHTEST

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

DE DADI NICOLAS

There was some talk that Nicolas could leave early for the NFL, but he opted to come back to try to build upon his nine-sack junior season. ... The 6-4, 236-pounder has always been a disruptive force rushing the passer off the edge, but now he's got a firmer grip on Bud Foster's defense. ... Started using his middle name, Lhomme, this spring. He got that name from his grandfather, who lives in New York.

EMERGING STAR

TE BUCKY HODGES

Virginia Tech plans to use Hodges all over the field, playing him at tight end and splitting him out wide to create matchup problems. ... Hodges was recruited to Tech as a quarterback. ... Hodges led the Hokies with seven touchdown receptions last season, when he was named a Freshman All-American by *USA Today*. ... Hodges didn't speak to the media all spring after an offseason misdemeanor arrest for public intoxication.

TOP NEWCOMER

DB C.J. REAVIS

The sophomore moved atop the depth chart at rover during the spring. ... The 6-1, 205-pound Reavis is considered one of the team's hardest hitters. ... Played in 12 games last season, mostly on special teams. ... Against rival Virginia in the regular-season finale, Reavis blocked a punt in the end zone that led to a Hokies' touchdown. ... His high school teammate and best friend, Desmond Frye, is competing for the other starting safety spot at Tech.

Photos courtesy of Virginia Tech Athletics.

that spot. Slye went 20 of 28 on field goal attempts and 33 of 34 on PATs last year.

Sophomore safety C.J. Reavis has shown a knack for blocking kicks, something Tech was once nationally renowned for. Sophomore Greg Stroman, who returned punts last season, and redshirt freshman Travon McMillian could add some pop to the return game. Stroman returned a punt 88 yards for a touchdown in the spring game.

SCHEDULE ANALYSIS

Virginia Tech won't get the chance to ease into the season. It hosts defending national champion Ohio State on Monday, Sept. 7, at Lane Stadium. The Buckeyes' only loss last season came against the Hokies, in Columbus.

That game is the first of two non-conference tilts against Big Ten opponents on this year's slate. The Hokies travel to play Purdue two weeks later.

In conference play, Tech once again avoids facing the ACC's elite. Florida State, Clemson and Louisville aren't on this year's schedule, and the Hokies don't play league scheduling partner Notre Dame, either. A four-game stretch at Miami, home against Duke, then at Boston College and at Georgia Tech, could be challenging.

— Mike Barber

WAKE FOREST DEMON DEACONS

For more coverage of the Demon Deacons, visit wakeforest.247Sports.com

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Warren Ruggiero | **DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR:** Mike Elko | **STADIUM:** BB&T Field: 31,500

YOUTHFUL DEACONS STILL DEALING WITH GROWING PAINS

As Dave Clawson went through his first year as the head coach at Wake Forest, he knew the Deacons needed to get bigger, stronger and faster to compete at the highest level.

After completing the 2014 season with a 3-9 record and looking ahead to this fall, Clawson has witnessed significant strides in those areas.

It started with reconstructing the offensive line, mixing two veterans with three promising redshirt freshmen, and then finding some playmakers for a unit that ranked last in the FBS last year with a mere 216.3 yards per game.

"Now that we've solidified the O-line, we've got to make more dynamic plays," Clawson said.

"And the only way you make more dynamic plays is with playmakers. And we have more than we had a year ago. I still don't think we have enough, and that's where you have three tailbacks coming in, and you've got five other receivers coming in. A lot of those guys are going to have a chance to play."

The list begins with true freshman Tabari Hines, an elusive wide receiver and returner from Florence, S.C., who enrolled in January and showed flashes in the spring of what he can provide.

Three freshman runners give Clawson more options at tailback — including Rocky Reid (who originally committed to Tennessee) and Matt Colburn (who was headed to Louisville).

Reid, who had more than 7,700 rushing yards and 90 touchdowns in a stellar prep career at Concord (N.C.) High School, is the nephew of former Deacon great Kenny Moore, who led Wake Forest to the 2006 ACC championship and Orange Bowl.

Colburn, chosen South Carolina's "Mr. Football" as a high school senior, was going to Louisville before he was informed a couple of days before Signing Day that there was no room for him.

In addition to more playmakers, the Deacons have shown impressive gains in weight and strength. Under the guidance of Brandon Hourigan, director of strength and conditioning, 31 players now have lift totals of 1,100 pounds or more (combining the bench press, power clean and back squat).

For example, at 6-4, 280, redshirt freshman Phil Haynes — the projected starter at left tackle — has added 25 pounds since arriving at Wake and now has just 12 percent body fat.

OFFENSE

Clawson's second team will be younger than his first, but there is more talent.

One of the major tasks has been improving the offensive line, and Clawson feels better about the prospects for that unit, which is anchored by senior captain Dylan Intemann, a 6-5, 305-pound guard. He is joined by junior guard Josh Harris and three promising redshirt freshmen.

Clawson hopes more positive results will be forthcoming a year after implementing his new system.

It helps that John Wolford, who threw for 2,037 yards and 12 touchdowns as a true freshman, is back to lead the offense after a year of seasoning.

In addition to upgrading the line, Clawson knows the Deacons need more playmakers on offense. True freshman Tabari Hines and redshirt freshman Cortez Lewis led the way at wide receiver in the spring, and more help is on the way.

"I think it's a fact we didn't have playmakers last year," Clawson said. "(Now) I think we're better than we were."

That list includes highly touted runners Rocky Reid, Matt Colburn and Tyler Bell, along with another group of receivers, including K.J. Brent, a transfer from South Carolina.

Tight end Cam Serigne, a redshirt sophomore, did make a splash last year, leading the team with 54 catches for 531 yards and five touchdowns. He was the nation's top receiving freshman tight end in 2014.

Flanker Jared Crump (32 catches for 339 yards) returns, along with tailback Isaiah Robinson, a strong inside runner who had 175 yards and three touchdowns as part of a limited rotation.

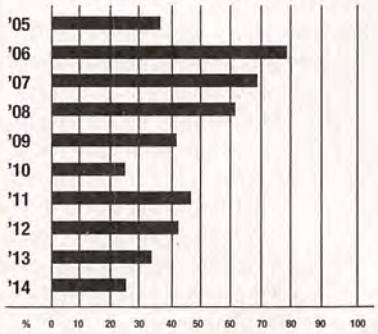
SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	'14 Record
Sept. 3	ELON	1-11
Sept. 12	at Syracuse	3-9
Sept. 19	at Army	4-8
Sept. 26	INDIANA	4-8
Oct. 3	FLORIDA STATE	13-1
Oct. 10	at Boston College	7-6
Oct. 17	at North Carolina	6-7
Oct. 24	NC STATE	8-5
Oct. 30	LOUISVILLE	9-4
Nov. 14	at Notre Dame	8-5
Nov. 21	at Clemson	10-3
Nov. 28	DUKE	9-4

RESULTS

	3-9, 1-7	
L	at ULM	10-17
W	GARDNER-WEBB	23-7
L	at Utah State	24-36
W	ARMY	24-21
L	at Louisville	10-20
L	at Florida State	3-43
L	SYRACUSE	7-30
L	BOSTON COLLEGE	17-23
L	CLEMSON	20-34
L	at NC State	13-42
W	VIRGINIA TECH (2OT)	6-3
L	at Duke	21-41

10-YEAR WINNING TREND



AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:
Winston-Salem, N.C.

2014:
3-9 overall, 1-7 ACC (T-6th, Atlantic)

COACH:
Dave Clawson — At Wake Forest: 3-9, 1 year; overall: 93-89, 15 years

RETURNING STARTERS:
15; 6 offense, 7 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH:
QB John Wolford, TE Cam Serigne, NT Tylor Harris, LB Brandon Chubb, LB Marquel Lee, S Ryan Janvion

PRIMARY STRENGTHS:
Wake Forest likes its front seven on defense, with six returning starters, including Harris and Chubb. Janvion is a leader on defense. More skill position help is on the way via the 2015 recruiting class.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS:
The loss of two outstanding corners, Merrill Noel and Kevin Johnson, is not something the Deacons can easily overcome. The offense has a long way to go after averaging 216.3 yards per game, the worst mark in the nation. And now the offensive line figures to have three redshirt freshman starters.

KEY LOSSES:
WR E.J. Scott, CB Kevin Johnson, CB Merrill Noel

OVERVIEW:
The front seven on defense will lead the way, but the offense must get in gear if the Deacons are to better last year's 3-9 record. Wolford did an admirable job as a true freshman quarterback, and Clawson likes the talent on the offensive line, although it's largely untested. It's all part of a youth movement that is still going to have growing pains in Clawson's second season.

KEY NUMBER:
3.38 The Deacons' average yards per play in 2014, which was 0.7 yards below the next-worst team, SMU.

QB
John
WOLFORD
Photo by Brian Tirpak

TE

CAM SERIGNE

Photo by Jeremy Brevard-USA TODAY Sports

SCOUTING REPORT: Offense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
QB	**John Wolford***	So.	Set all school records for a true freshman QB.	Kendall Hinton, Fr.
RB	Isaiah Robinson	So.	Strong inside runner had three rushing TDs in 2014.	Dezmond Wortham, So.
WR	Cortez Lewis	Fr.	Vast potential; coming off shoulder surgery.	Jonathan Williams, Jr.
WR	Tabari Hines	Fr.	Big-play threat; impressed coaches in the spring.	P.J. Howard IV, Sr.
FL	**Jared Crump***	Jr.	Big target is team's top returning WR in catches (32).	Tyree Harris, So.
TE	**Cam Serigne***	So.	Led team in receptions last year with 54 and TDs (5).	Devin Pike, So.
LT	Phil Haynes	Fr.	Promising first-year player who was a basketball player.	Will Smith, Jr.
LG	**Josh Harris***	Jr.	Provides experience; made all 12 starts in 2014.	Patrick Osterhage, Fr.
C	Ryan Anderson	Fr.	Great size at center at 6-6, 290 pounds.	**A'Lique Terry, So.***
RG	**Dylan Intemann***	Sr.	Leader of offensive line with 30 straight starts.	Tyler Hayworth, Jr.
RT	Justin Herron	Fr.	One of three redshirt freshman starters on line.	Nick Luedeke, Fr.
PK	**Mike Weaver***	So.	Connected on his first 10 field goals in 2014.	Adam Centers, So.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

SCOUTING REPORT: Defense

POS	STARTER	YR.	COMMENT	BACKUP/KEY DEPTH
DE	Duke Ejiofor	So.	Lone new starter in front seven; had two sacks.	Chris Stewart, Fr.
NT	**Tylor Harris***	Sr.	Right place, right time with four fumble recoveries.	Zeek Rodney, So.
DT	**Josh Banks***	Jr.	Had 72-yard interception return for TD last year.	Willie Yarbary, Fr.
DE	**Wendell Dunn***	So.	Started all 12 games last year as a redshirt freshman.	Julian Thomas-Jackson, So.
LB	**Brandon Chubb***	Sr.	Wake's active career tackle leader with 219.	Jaboree Williams, So.
LB	**Marquel Lee***	Jr.	One of three Deacons with more than 100 tackles last year.	Grant Dawson, So.
LB	**Hunter Williams***	Sr.	Steady and consistent player; one of captains in 2014.	Zack Wary, Fr.
CB	Brad Watson	Jr.	Missed most of the spring with wrist injury.	Thomas Dillon, So.
CB	Josh Okonye	So.	Saw lot of action last year as a nickel back.	John Armstrong, Jr.
SS	**Ryan Janvion***	Jr.	Led team in tackles last year with 115.	Demetrius Kemp, Fr.
FS	Thomas Brown	Jr.	Might be the hardest hitter on defense.	Cameron Glenn, Fr.
P	**Alex Kinal***	Sr.	Allowed no touchbacks in 12 games last year.	Mike Weaver, So.

***Returning Starter in Bold**

The Deacons had trouble moving the ball, finishing last in the FBS in total offense last season. Wake Forest's longest run from scrimmage was just 36 yards.

"If you look at how we run the ball, we're clearly better from a year ago," Clawson said after spring drills.

DEFENSE

For Wake Forest, it's what's up front that counts — as in the front seven.

Six starters return from that group, including outside linebacker Brandon Chubb and nose tackle Tylor Harris. Clawson hopes this team strength will help soften the blow of losing elite cornerbacks Merrill Noel and Kevin Johnson, who was the 16th overall pick in the 2015 NFL Draft by the Houston Texans.

There is still talent in the secondary, led by strong safety Ryan Janvion, a redshirt junior who served as team captain last year and was re-elected for 2015. Janvion led the team with 115 tackles last season.

Promising junior Brad Watson, who missed most of the spring with a wrist injury, will man one of the corner spots, with redshirt freshman Josh Okonye on the other side. Okonye saw a lot of action in 2014 as a nickel back.

Like Janvion, Chubb is a two-time team captain (including for this season) and a leader on the defense. He was second on the team with 109 tackles in 2014. Running mate Marquel Lee, a junior middle linebacker, also had more than 100 tackles, including four sacks. The coaching staff considers him an All-ACC-caliber player.

Up front, Harris, a 6-4, 305-pound senior, has become a force at nose tackle. He shared the national lead last year in blocked kicks with three and tied for second nationally in fumble recoveries with four.

Clawson expects his front seven to put more pressure on the quarterback with a year of seasoning in his system. Josh Banks, a redshirt sophomore defensive tackle, had four sacks last year. Defensive end Wendell Dunn was the only redshirt freshman on defense to start all 12 games.

The defense almost single-handedly delivered the Deacons' only ACC victory last season in a 6-3 double-overtime victory over Virginia Tech after the teams battled to a scoreless draw in regulation.

"We put offensive football back 100 years," Clawson quipped after that game.

He will be counting heavily on the defense again in 2015.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Sophomore Mike Weaver made his first 10 field goal attempts and all 19 of his extra-point tries in a solid college debut. For the season, he converted 15 of 19 field goal attempts, including a long of 50 yards.

Senior Alex Kinal, who was named second-team All-ACC last year, averaged an impressive 43.6 yards per punt, including

NOTEBOOK

Wake Forest tentatively projects to have only four senior position starters, and it's not as if there is a big wave of seniors vying for more time. The Deacons have just six scholarship seniors, which include starting punter **Alex Kinal**.

The school notes that this is very likely Wake Forest's smallest senior class since the team had just two in 1944, when many young men were fighting overseas to bring about an end to World War II.

"We will be an extremely young football team next year, but I think we have some talented young men that will start to develop into really good ACC players," said coach **Dave Clawson**.

Three redshirt freshmen are projected to start on the offensive line.

"The biggest jump was on the offensive line," Clawson said about spring practice.

"I mean, as we left spring football, we have three redshirt freshman starting on our O-line. That's certainly never ideal, but I think these guys are going to be good young players, and in our top 10, probably five or six of them are freshmen. Again, these guys will learn and develop, and we'll have a good offensive line in the near future."

• Cornerback **Kevin Johnson** was the 16th overall pick in the NFL Draft, and he became the third Demon Deacons player to go in the first round in the past 13 drafts. The others were defensive end **Calvin Pace** (No. 18 overall, 2003) and linebacker **Aaron Curry** (No. 4, 2009).

• Wake Forest unveiled new uniforms in May, and one of the fresh touches includes jersey sleeves featuring a new pattern. According to the university: "Drawn from the University Shield and the wrought-iron architectural details that punctuate the campus, the graphic forms a stylized 'W.' Its arching branches are suggestive of growth and collaboration — keys to success as coach Dave Clawson enters his second season with the Demon Deacons."

The team's home uniforms will be black jerseys with gold trim, and gold pants. The away combination will be all white. Wake Forest will also use an all-black look at times.

DEMON DEACONS SPRING ROSTER

Quarterbacks	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
15 Kyle Driscoll	QB	6-1	215	Fr.	Garden City, NY
2 Kendall Hinton	QB	6-0	185	Fr.	Durham
10 John Wolford	QB	6-1	205	So.	Jacksonville, FL
Running Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
29 Tyler Henderson	RB	5-9	180	So.	Lawrenceville, GA
28 Christopher Pearcey	RB	5-11	195	Fr.	Bradenton, FL
21 Isaiah Robinson	RB	5-10	215	So.	Charlotte
23 James Ward	RB	5-10	210	Jr.	DeLand, FL
20 Dezmond Wortham	RB	6-0	205	So.	Frisco, TX
32 Charles Argenzio	FB	6-0	230	Jr.	Richmond, VA
49 Spencer Stone	FB	6-3	225	So.	Richmond, KY
Wide Receivers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
88 Jared Crump	WR	6-3	205	Jr.	St. John's, FL
12 Tyree Harris	WR	6-3	185	So.	Marietta, GA
8 Tabari Hines	WR	5-10	165	Fr.	Florence, SC
82 P.J. Howard IV	WR	6-1	190	Sr.	Portsmouth, VA
81 Cortez Lewis	WR	6-1	200	Fr.	Demopolis, AL
7 Maddox Stamey	WR	6-2	180	Jr.	Rutherfordton
83 Jonathan Williams	WR	6-3	185	Jr.	Atlanta, GA
Tight Ends	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
80 Bowman Archibald	TE	6-5	245	Fr.	Dade City, FL
46 Steve Donatell	TE	6-6	230	Jr.	Lone Tree, CO
84 Brendan O'Neil	TE	6-4	230	So.	Burlington, MA
41 Devin Pike	TE	6-6	245	So.	Cincinnati, OH
85 Cam Serigne	TE	6-3	245	So.	Ashburn, VA
Offensive Linemen	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
70 Ryan Anderson	OL	6-6	290	Fr.	Raleigh
67 Taylor Chambers	OL	6-8	290	So.	Columbia, SC
66 Rocco Esposito	OL	6-5	315	So.	Coraopolis, PA
79 Cameron Gardner	OL	6-5	285	So.	Bailey
65 Josh Harris	OL	6-4	310	Jr.	Milton, GA
74 Phil Haynes	OL	6-4	280	Fr.	Raleigh
78 Tyler Hayworth	OL	6-4	325	Jr.	Kingsport, TN
75 Justin Herron	OL	6-5	290	Fr.	Silver Spring, MD
63 Dylan Intemann	OL	6-5	305	Sr.	Wake Forest
60 Nick Luedeke	OL	6-5	265	Fr.	Cary
68 Patrick Osterhage	OL	6-4	300	Fr.	Centerville, OH
77 Will Smith	OL	6-5	305	Jr.	Charlotte
76 Joel Suggs	OL	6-6	300	Jr.	Sophia
55 A'Lique Terry	OL	6-1	310	So.	Hialeah, FL
56 Harry Warner	OL	6-3	260	Fr.	Spring Lake, NJ

Defensive Linemen	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown
62 Reid Althoff	DL	6-4	255	So.	Sarasota, FL
40 Josh Banks	DL	6-4	275	Jr.	Cary
14 Wendell Dunn	DL	6-3	250	So.	Miami, FL
53 Duke Ejiofor	DL	6-4	275	So.	Houston, TX
94 William Flood	DL	6-2	265	Jr.	Atlanta, GA
36 Tylor Harris	DL	6-4	305	Sr.	Baton Rouge, LA
57 Ali Lamot	DL	6-2	265	So.	Mebane
95 Sheldon Lewinson	DL	6-2	260	Jr.	Seffner, FL
93 Zeek Rodney	DL	6-1	295	So.	Rock Hill, SC
90 Rashawn Shaw	DL	6-3	250	Fr.	Fort Pierce, FL
96 Chris Stewart	DL	6-3	260	Fr.	Petal, MS
42 Julian Thomas-Jackson	DL	6-4	220	So.	Dothan, AL
92 Willie Yarbary	DL	6-2	280	Fr.	Augusta, GA
Linebackers	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
48 Brandon Chubb	LB	6-1	245	Sr.	Powder Springs, GA
50 Grant Dawson	LB	6-1	225	So.	Winston-Salem
8 Marquel Lee	LB	6-3	235	Jr.	Waldorf, MD
28 Teddy Matthews	LB	6-3	240	Jr.	West Palm Beach, FL
44 Kalin McNeil	LB	6-1	225	Fr.	McLeansville
58 Vincent Paolucci	LB	6-0	225	Fr.	San Diego, CA
10 Zack Wary	LB	6-4	225	Fr.	Rogers, AR
30 Hunter Williams	LB	6-0	220	Sr.	Wake Forest
39 Jaboree Williams	LB	6-0	240	So.	Deerfield Beach, FL
Defensive Backs	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
18 John Armstrong	DB	5-9	165	Jr.	Orlando, FL
26 Thomas Brown	DB	6-3	220	Jr.	Evans, GA
29 Deonte Davis	DB	5-10	185	Jr.	Snellville, GA
37 Thomas Dillon	DB	5-10	180	So.	Houston, TX
23 Cameron Glenn	DB	6-1	200	Fr.	Stone Mountain, GA
27 Bryant Gross-Armiento	DB	6-1	190	So.	Sunrise, FL
22 Ryan Janvion	DB	5-11	190	Jr.	Miami, FL
34 Demetrius Kemp	DB	6-1	205	Fr.	Demopolis, AL
13 Jalen Latter	DB	6-0	190	Jr.	Charlotte
24 Josh Okonye	DB	6-0	200	So.	Sugar Land, TX
25 Brad Watson	DB	6-0	190	Jr.	Round Rock, TX
Specialists	**Pos.**	**Ht.**	**Wt.**	**Yr.**	**Hometown**
98 Adam Centers	PK	6-0	195	So.	Coppell, TX
18 Mike Weaver	PK/P	6-1	180	So.	Pine City, NY
38 Alexander Kinal	P	6-4	205	Sr.	Adelaide, South Australia
64 Chase Wilson	LS	6-2	210	So.	Mooresville
15 Garrett Wilson	LS	6-3	195	Fr.	Sanford

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	14.8	124
Rushing	39.9	124
Passing	176.3	107
Total	216.3	125

DEFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	26.4	61
Rushing	182.7	81
Passing	186.6	12
Total	369.3	40

TO MARGIN	PER GAME	RANK
- 2	- 0.17	T-76

INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING

NAME	GP	Effic	Cmp	Att	Int	Pct	Yards	TD	Long	Avg/G
J. Wolford	12	108.0	214	367	14	58.3	2037	12	46	169.8
T. Cameron	3	91.3	10	16	0	62.5	55	0	10	18.3

RECEIVING

NAME	GP	No.	Yards	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
C. Serigne	12	54	531	9.8	5	32	44.2
EJ.Scott	12	50	513	10.3	4	36	42.8
M. James	9	40	401	10.0	0	36	44.6

RUSHING

NAME	GP	Att.	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
D. Wortham	9	84	282	42	240	2.9	0	20	26.7
I. Robinson	12	98	251	76	175	1.8	3	15	14.6
O. Reynolds	9	69	191	21	170	2.5	0	36	18.9

DEF. LEADERS

Tackles: R. Janvion 115, B. Chubb 109, M. Lee 101
Tackles for loss: M. Lee 12, Z. Allen 11, two tied with 7.5
Sacks: Z. Allen 5, J. Banks 4, M. Lee 4
Interceptions: M. Noel 3, H. Williams 1, K. Johnson 1, J. Banks 1

247SPORTS DEMON DEACONS RECRUITING 2015

3 NEWCOMERS OF IMPACT

Tabari Hines
The next top prospect out of Dr. Dean Boyd's program at Bennettsville (S.C.) Marlboro County. The wide receiver stole the show in the spring game. Look for him to be a big part of the offense in the years to come.

Rocky Reid
Put up huge numbers in a decorated prep career helping his team to state twice. Reid brings the size and power to hit many doubles in the inside run game. The former Tennessee commit was a huge get to stay in state.

Dionte Austin
Austin may not have ideal bulk or strength but makes up for it at times with elite quickness and length. Could develop into the program's top cover man down the road.

SLEEPER

Bowman Archibald
A rare flip from Miami to the Demon Deacons. Archibald has the versatility and size to help Wake Forest for many years.

2016 NEEDS

Wake Forest will continue to search for size on both lines that they can bring in, redshirt and develop — that plan remains the same. The Demon Deacons don't have many scholarships to give this cycle so the premium will be on quality.

— Ryan Bartow

247SPORTS COMPOSITE

0	0	22	3
✪✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪✪	✪✪✪	✪✪

Commitments	25
Average Stars	2.88
Total Stars	72
National Rank: 52	ACC: 11

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
Bowman Archibald	TE	6-5	244	✪✪✪	Dade City, FL	Pasco
Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 18 tight end and No. 76 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Honorable mention all-state. . . Had 29 tackles and one interception as a senior.						
Dionte Austin	CB	6-0	150	✪✪✪	Towson, MD	Calvert Hall College
Ranked as the nation's No. 51 cornerback and No. 12 prospect in Maryland according to the 247Sports Composite… *USA TODAY* first team all-state . . . Had 27 tackles, one interception, nine pass break-ups, and one forced fumble as a senior.						
Lee Autry	DT	6-2	265	✪✪✪	Albemarle	Albemarle
Ranked as the nation's No. 74 defensive tackle and No. 39 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite.						
Alex Bachman	WR	5-11	175	✪✪✪	Thousand Oaks, CA	Oaks Christian
Ranked as the nation's No. 224 wide receiver and No. 219 prospect in California according to the 247Sports Composite… Team captain as a senior . . . Three-sport athlete in football track and basketball.						
Elontae Bateman	DT	6-3	260	✪✪✪	Memphis, TN	Ridgeway
Ranked as the nation's No. 117 defensive tackle and No. 43 prospect in Tennessee according to the 247Sports Composite… Two-time Memphis Defensive Lineman of the Year . . . Two-time all-region selection . . . First team all-district as a senior.						
Jessie Bates	S	6-3	185	✪✪✪	Fort Wayne, IN	R Nelson Snider
Ranked as the nation's No. 126 safety and No. 25 prospect in Indiana according to the 247Sports Composite… Two-time first-team all-state selection by the Associated Press in 2013 and 2014 . . . Recorded nine interceptions as a senior.						
Tyler Bell	RB	6-0	200	✪✪✪	Mobile, AL	Faith Academy
Ranked as the nation's No. 159 running back and No. 60 prospect in Alabama according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 175 carries for 962 yards and 11 touchdowns as a senior . . . Finished his prep career with 2,258 rushing yards, 491 receiving yards, and 26 touchdowns.						
Jake Benzinger	OT	6-7	275	✪✪	Williamstown, MA	Mt Greylock Reg
Ranked as the nation's No. 231 offensive tackle and No. 14 prospect in Massachusetts according to the 247Sports Composite… Three-year starter on the offensive line . . . Also a standout basketball and baseball player.						
Paris Black	SDE	6-4	235	✪✪✪	Fayetteville	Terry Sanford
Ranked as the nation's No. 56 strongside defensive end and No. 37 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded 146 tackles, 18 tackles for a loss, four forced fumbles and an interception as a senior.						
Chris Calhoun	ILB	6-3	220	✪✪✪	Roswell, GA	Centennial
Ranked as the nation's No. 42 inside linebacker and No. 109 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Earned all-region honors in both his junior and senior seasons . . . Defensive MVP as a senior.						
Steven Claude	WR	6-0	182	✪✪✪	Hialeah, FL	Champagnat Catholic – Hialeah
Ranked as the nation's No. 68 wide receiver and No. 77 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Selected to play in the Nike North-South All-Star game as well as the Offense-Defense All-American Bowl.						
Matt Colburn	RB	5-9	186	✪✪✪	Irmo, SC	Dutch Fork
Ranked as the nation's No. 102 running back and No. 23 prospect in South Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite.						
Nathan Gilliam	OT	6-5	270	✪✪✪	Knoxville, TN	Farragut
Ranked as the nation's No. 87 offensive tackle and No. 23 prospect in Tennessee according to the 247Sports Composite… Named All-District 4AAA and the District Lineman of the Year . . . Played in the Toyota East-West All-Star game.						

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	Hometown	School
T.J. Haney	OT	6-6	315	✪✪✪	Gaffney, SC	Gaffney
Ranked as the nation's No. 116 offensive tackle and No. 15 prospect in South Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Team captain as a senior . . . First-team all-state selection in 2014.						
Amari Henderson	S	6-1	182	✪✪✪	Charlotte	Mallard Creek
Ranked as the nation's No. 107 safety and No. 48 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Named AP first-team all-state in 2014 . . . Recorded 25 tackles, 29 pass break-ups, and nine interceptions as a senior.						
Tabari Hines	WR	5-10	165	✪✪✪	Bennettsville, SC	Marlboro County
Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 151 wide receiver and No. 17 prospect in South Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… First-team all-state pick as a senior . . . Named All-Region 6-3A as a senior.						
Kendall Hinton	QB	6-0	180	✪✪✪	Durham	Southern
Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 31 pro-style quarterback and No. 29 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite… Team captain as a senior . . . Passed for 3,258 yards and 30 touchdowns while rushing for 835 yards as a senior.						
Kyle Kearns	QB	6-3	195	✪✪✪	Pleasanton, CA	Foothill
Ranked as the nation's No. 23 pro-style quarterback and No. 65 prospect in California according to the 247Sports Composite… First team all-conference selection . . . Passed for 6,300 yards and 70 touchdowns in his prep career.						
Nate Mays	OLB	6-2	215	✪✪✪	Dalton, GA	Dalton
Ranked as the nation's No. 143 outside linebacker and No. 191 prospect in Georgia according to the 247Sports Composite… Recorded 148 tackles, five sacks, and two interceptions as a senior.						
Rocky Reid	RB	6-0	220	✪✪✪	Concord	Concord
Ranked as the nation's No. 47 running back and No. 18 prospect in North Carolina according to the 247Sports Composite…Was committed to Tennessee for much of the process before signing with Wake… Carried the ball 300 times for 2,734 yards and 38 touchdowns as a senior . . . Played in the Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas.						
Justin Strnad	OLB	6-3	205	✪✪✪	Tarpon Springs, FL	East Lake
Ranked as the nation's No. 136 outside linebacker and No. 275 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Had 81 tackles, eight pass break-ups, three tackles for loss, three sacks and three interceptions as a senior.						
Charles Wade Jr.	ATH	5-11	190	✪✪✪	Jacksonville, FL	Bishop Kenny
Ranked as the nation's No. 117 athlete and No. 210 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Caught 68 passes for 1,346 yards and 17 touchdowns as a senior while rushing for 522 yards and seven scores.						
Scott Washington	WR	6-5	203	✪✪✪	Washington, DC	St. John's College
Ranked as the nation's No. 94 wide receiver and No. 9 prospect in D.C. according to the 247Sports Composite… Team captain as a senior . . . Had 19 receptions for 422 yards and two scores in 2014.						
Kahlil Welsh	DT	6-3	275	✪✪	Jacksonville, FL	Sandalwood
Ranked as the nation's No. 137 defensive tackle and No. 331 prospect in Florida according to the 247Sports Composite… Four-year starter in both football and wrestling . . . All-conference in football in 2014.						
Garrett Wilson	LS	6-4	210	✪✪	Sanford	Southern Lee
Enrolled in January… Ranked as the nation's No. 16 long snapper according to the 247Sports Composite… Second-team all-state selection.						

PLAYER PROFILE

Chubb Sets Sights on Postseason Promised Land

Brandon Chubb wants to play in a bowl game before he leaves Wake Forest. This is the last chance for Chubb, an outside linebacker and senior captain.

Chubb did go to the postseason in his freshman year in 2011, when the Deacons played Mississippi State in the Music City Bowl, but he was a redshirt and did not play.

Since that game — which was a 23-17 loss that resulted in a final record of 6-7 for Wake Forest — the football fortunes for the Deacons slipped to 5-7 in 2012, 4-8 in 2013 and 3-9 last season.

Based on those results, not many would expect Chubb and the Deacons to be thinking about postseason plans. However, he sees a difference as Wake Forest prepares for its second season under coach Dave Clawson.

"We have more talent, depth and experience, and you could tell a difference this spring," Chubb said. "Everyone has bought in. Now we know what is expected of us and are picking up on all the little details that Coach talks about."

The Deacons leaned on the defense last year as a young offense sputtered to gain any traction. Chubb (6-1, 245) was one of the leaders of the unit with a career-high 109 tackles; he had three games of 12 or more stops.

Defensive coordinator Mike Elko said Chubb is one of the vital cogs in a defense that returns six starters in the front seven.

"Brandon is an extremely physical player who has established himself as one of the top linebackers in the ACC," Elko said. "He has been very productive, and we expect another great year from him this fall."

Chubb, a native of Powder Springs, Ga., comes from a football family. His dad, Aaron played at the University of Georgia and was in the NFL for four years with the New England Patriots and Green Bay Packers. Little brother Bradley is a sophomore at NC State, and cousin Nick is a standout sophomore runner at Georgia.

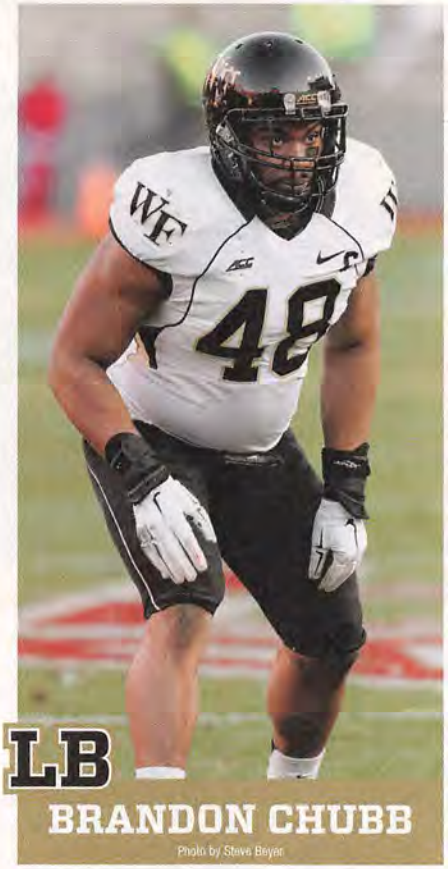


Photo by Steve Boyer

Despite the bloodlines, Brandon Chubb said he didn't draw much interest coming out of high school.

"I've always played with a chip on my shoulder," he said. "I wasn't recruited, and Wake Forest gave me a chance. Every day I'm out there, I try to make the most of it."

Chubb has certainly done that, but there's still some unfinished business.

"I'm graduating with a bowl ring on my finger," Chubb said.

BEST AND BRIGHTEST

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

S RYAN JANVION

Led the team in tackles last season as a redshirt sophomore with 115, including 54 solo stops. ... Hard-hitting safety has 210 career total tackles, putting him on pace to finish among Wake Forest's all-time tackle leaders. ... A two-time captain, he will be counted on for leadership in the secondary, which must replace its starting cornerbacks, including first-round draft choice Kevin Johnson. ... A strong Academic All-America candidate, with a 3.57 GPA following the fall semester.

EMERGING STAR

TE CAM SERIGNE

The nation's top receiving freshman tight end in 2014 with 54 receptions, which was the most ever by a Wake Forest tight end. ... Was second in the country among all freshmen with 531 receiving yards and five touchdowns, which also was the team best in 2014 for all pass catchers. ... The 6-3, 245-pound product from Ashburn, Va., started all 12 games and combined with backup Devin Pike, who got five starts, in frequent two tight end packages.

TOP NEWCOMER

WR TABARI HINES

A true freshman who enrolled in school in January and made a big impression in the spring, including catching a 25-yard TD pass in the spring game. ... Speedy receiver has the potential to be one of the playmakers the offense desperately needs. ... Also provides the added element of being a dynamic returner. ... Scored 46 touchdowns (15 on returns) in high school in Florence, S.C.

Photos courtesy of Wake Forest Athletics.

a long of 73 yards. He was one of three punters in the country who didn't have a single touchback while kicking in all his team's games. Kinal, elected a captain for 2015, also serves as the holder.

Wake Forest brought in freshman Garrett Wilson as the long snapper.

SCHEDULE ANALYSIS

New York could hold the key to the young Deacons' fortunes in 2015.

After the opener at home against Elon on Sept. 3, Wake Forest visits Syracuse and Army West Point in back-to-back trips up north. These are critical games on the road against opponents that the Deacons can match up with. Syracuse was also 1-7 in the ACC and 3-9 overall last season, and the Black Knights posted a 4-8 record in 2014.

A home game follows against 4-8 Indiana to close out September, so a good start could provide some confidence before the Deacons enter the meat of their ACC schedule, starting with Florida State and including a game at Clemson. A game at Notre Dame is also on the slate.

Wake Forest figures to be underdogs at home, but perhaps there is an upset lurking in games against NC State, Louisville and Duke as the Deacons look to take a step forward in 2015.

— Jim Buice

APPALACHIAN ST | MOUNTAINEERS

Sun Belt rank: 1 **Record: 7-5** **Sun Belt: 6-2 (3rd)** **Stadium: Kidd Brewer Stadium (24,050)**

MOUNTAINEERS at a GLANCE

LOCATION: Boone, N.C.
COACH: Scott Satterfield — At Appalachian State and overall: 11-13, 2 years
OFFENSIVE COORDINATORS: Dwayne Ledford, Frank Ponce
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Nate Woody

LAST LEAGUE TITLE: 2012, Southern co-champs
LAST BOWL: None
RETURNING STARTERS: 20; 10 offense, 8 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH: QB Taylor Lamb, RB Marcus Cox, WR Simms McElfresh, WR Malachi Jones, DE Ronald Blair, LB John Law, LB Keenan Gilchrist, CB Doug Middleton

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: With so many veterans on both sides of the ball returning, this is an experienced group that finished 2014 on a six-game winning streak. It's a deep team with explosive offensive players in Lamb, Cox, McElfresh, and Jones. A strong defensive core is led by Blair, Law and Middleton.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: You can't overlook that this is a team that gave up huge batches of points (52 at Michigan, 47 to South Alabama and, most stunningly, 55 to Liberty) and lost to Southern Mississippi in the first half of the year. Coverage teams were a liability and need to step up.

TAYLOR LAMB
Photo by Rick Osentoski/USA TODAY Sports

"What we have now is a team of guys that have learned how to win."
— Scott Satterfield

OFFENSE

With 10 starters returning, including quarterback Taylor Lamb, who was the 2014 Sun Belt Freshman of the Year, Appalachian State looks to pick up where it left off last season, when it finished on a six-game winning streak.

As he got more comfortable and as the ground game started clicking behind running backs Marcus Cox and Terrence Upshaw, Lamb went on to complete more than 61 percent of his passes, averaging just over 198 yards a game.

Lamb also rushed for 483 yards as the Mountaineers ended up averaging 241.8 yards a game on the ground. Cox (1,415 yards rushing) and Upshaw (573) return.

Wide receiver is another deep position. Simms McElfresh (42 catches, 484 yards), Malachi Jones (36-585), Montez McGuire (25-386) and Bobo Beathard (17-202) were Nos. 1-through-4 in receiving. Tight end Barrett Burns had two touchdown receptions among his 14 catches (129 yards).

The line returns four starters, including an all-conference candidate in tackle Beau Nunn. The only new starter, tackle Davante Harris, actually started the first five games last season before being regulated to a backup role.

DEFENSE

Eight starters return, and that doesn't include defensive end Nathaniel Norwood, who started the last four games and ended his sophomore season with 3.5 sacks.

The only real new face in the starting lineup could be cornerback Brandon Pinckney, who played mostly on special teams as a freshman. Pinckney and junior college transfer Mondo Williams are competing for the spot vacated by Joel Ross, who had three interceptions and a sack in 2014.

The unit overall took some early hits last season, twice giving up more than 50 points in losses to Michigan and Liberty, the latter in overtime. But in the last six games, the Mountaineers held opponents to an average of fewer than 20 points per outing.

Linebacker John Law earned second-team All-Sun Belt honors in leading the Mountaineers in tackles with 91. Defensive end Ronald Blair was in the top 10 in the conference in sacks (six) and tackles for loss (13). Safety Doug Middleton, a first-team all-conference selection, was tied for fourth in the league in interceptions with four.

Middleton was credited with breaking up six other passes and was second on the team in tackles with 74, including six for loss.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Special teams could be a weakness. Punter Bentlee Critcher averaged 40.7 yards per attempt, but Appalachian State's net average was a meager 31.2 yards. Kicker Zach Matics made only 1 of 5 field goal attempts.

OVERVIEW

If the Mountaineers can avoid key injuries and get better play out of their special teams, they have the experience and talent to challenge for double-digit wins and the Sun Belt title. They look to be overmatched in only one game — at Clemson on Sept. 12 — and conference contenders Georgia Southern, Arkansas State and Louisiana all come to Boone.

— Paul Borden

TOP NEWCOMER

CB Mondo Williams: He was a second-team All-American last season at Iowa Western, helping his team to an 11-0 record by intercepting eight passes and returning one for a touchdown. He will compete with sophomore Brandon Pinckney for a starting corner spot.

2015 PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE					
QB	11	**Taylor Lamb***	6-2	200	So.
RB	14	**Marcus Cox***	5-10	200	Jr.
WR	81	**Bobo Beathard***	5-10	185	Sr.
WR	7	**Malachi Jones***	6-2	210	Sr.
WR	83	**Simms McElfresh***	5-10	180	Sr.
TE	85	**Barrett Burns***	6-4	235	Jr.
LT	73	Davante Harris	6-6	275	Sr.
LG	75	**Parker Collins***	6-3	295	Jr.
C	60	**Jesse Chapman***	6-1	275	Sr.
RG	70	**Colby Gossett***	6-6	315	So.
RT	50	**Beau Nunn***	6-4	290	So.
DEFENSE					
DE	49	**Ronald Blair***	6-4	275	Sr.
NT	72	**Tyson Fernandez***	6-2	330	Jr.
DE	40	Nathaniel Norwood	6-2	235	Jr.
LB	6	**Kennan Gilchrist***	6-2	210	Jr.
LB	45	**Eric Boggs***	6-3	235	So.
LB	88	**John Law***	6-0	235	Jr.
LB	11	**Devan Stringer***	5-11	195	So.
CB	27	**Latrell Gibbs***	5-10	170	So.
CB	18	Brandon Pinckney	6-0	185	So.
S	21	**Doug Middleton***	6-0	205	Sr.
S	3	Alex Gray	6-3	210	Jr.
SPECIAL TEAMS					
K	59	**Zach Matics***	6-2	195	Sr.
P	91	**Bentlee Critcher***	6-1	190	Jr.

***Returning starters in Bold**

2015 SCHEDULE

Sept. 5	HOWARD
Sept. 12	at Clemson
Sept. 26	at Old Dominion
Oct. 3	WYOMING
Oct. 10	at Georgia State
Oct. 17	at ULM
Oct. 22	GEORGIA SOUTHERN
Oct. 31	TROY
Nov. 5	ARKANSAS STATE
Nov. 14	at Idaho
Nov. 28	LOUISIANA
Dec. 5	at South Alabama

2014 RESULTS

L	at Michigan	14-52
W	CAMPBELL	66-0
L	at Southern Miss	20-21
L	at Georgia Southern	14-34
L	SOUTH ALABAMA	21-47
L	LIBERTY (OT)	48-55
W	at Troy	53-14
W	GEORGIA STATE	44-0
W	ULM	31-29
W	at Arkansas State	37-32
W	at Louisiana	35-16
W	IDAHO	45-28

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	35.7	N/A
Rushing	241.8	N/A
Passing	219.8	N/A
Total	461.6	N/A
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**RANK**
Scoring	27.3	N/A
Rushing	152.3	N/A
Passing	195.2	N/A
Total	347.5	N/A
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**RANK**
- 2	- 0.17	N/A

CHARLOTTE | 49ERS

C-USA rank: 13 | Record: 5-6 (FCS) | Stadium: Jerry Richardson Stadium (15,000)

49ERS at a GLANCE

Location: Charlotte, N.C.
COACH: Brad Lambert — At Charlotte and overall: 10-12, 2 years
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Jeff Mullen
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Matt Wallerstedt

LAST LEAGUE TITLE: None
LAST BOWL: None
RETURNING STARTERS: 19; 9 offense; 8 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH: RB Kalif Phillips, WR Austin Duke, NG Larry Ogunjobi, LB Caleb Clayton-Molby, S Branden Dozier

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: Charlotte's offense, with Phillips and Duke doing most of the damage, has been explosive against a mostly FCS schedule. The offensive line returns virtually intact, too.
POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: The defense struggled against those same FCS opponents, allowing 31.6 points and 477.5 yards per game. Whether new coordinator Wallerstedt can fix that is Charlotte's biggest challenge.

OFFENSE

Charlotte, making its debut this season in the Football Bowl Subdivision, has an offense that could cause problems to Conference USA foes.

Running back Kalif Phillips (1,436 yards, 20 touchdowns) and receiver Austin Duke (79 catches, 1,373 yards, nine touchdowns) are dangerous from any spot on the field. Quarterback Matt Johnson, who missed the final three games of 2014 with a knee injury, is a tough competitor who is also a threat on the ground.

Depth could be a factor behind Phillips, however, with no proven backups on the roster. That's not a problem at the receiver spot, however, with Trent Bostick a capable No. 2 receiver (33 catches, 365 yards, two scores in nine games) and a group of others competing for the third spot.

Johnson, a two-year starter who has thrown for 4,522 yards and 34 career touchdowns, was competing for the starter's job in the spring with junior Lee McNeill (who played well in relief of Johnson) and redshirt freshman Brooks Barden.

Charlotte's offensive line, which returns four starters, is experienced. Left tackle Jamal Covington leads a group that allowed just 12 sacks last season.

DEFENSE

Charlotte defense was shredded last season, allowing 31.6 points and 477.5 yards per game.

Some of that was due to injuries (middle linebackers Nick Cook and Caleb Clayton-Molby were out much of the season), but new defensive coordinator Matt Wallerstedt has his work cut out.

Nose guard Larry Ogunjobi anchors the line, which will be bolstered by the additions of Devon Johnson — who missed last season with an Achilles' tendon injury — and Syracuse transfer Josh Manley.

The linebacker corps gets back Cook and Clayton-Molby, but loses Dustin Crouser and Nico Alcalde, both of whom left school and were among the team's top tacklers last season.

Karrington King, who played well when Cook and Clayton-Molby went down, had 79 tackles last season. Mark Pettit has been switched from the line and likely will start at one of the outside linebacker spots.

KALIF PHILLIPS
Photo by AP Photo/Chuck Burton

"Now we are in Conference USA, and we are ready for it."

— DB Cortezz Nixon

Safety Branden Dozier led the team in tackles (86) and, as usual, it's not good sign if a defensive back does that.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Place-kicker Blake Brewer has range, making a 51-yarder last season. Punter Arthur Hart struggled as a freshman, averaging only 36.3 yards per attempt, but he allowed only three returns all season.

OVERVIEW

The 49ers, who started football in 2013 and played as an FCS independent in their first two seasons, will take their lumps over the next few years as they adjust to life in Conference USA. Look for Charlotte's offense to keep the team in games, at least until the defense finds itself. A highlight will be a visit to Kentucky on Nov. 21, Charlotte's first game against a power-conference team.

— David Scott

TOP NEWCOMER

PR/KR Nate Mullen: Mullen, a true freshman, could rejuvenate a return game that was weak in 2014. Mullen, the son of offensive coordinator Jeff Mullen, is the career leader in all-purpose yards at Hickory Ridge High in Harrisburg, N.C.

2015 PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	8	**Matt Johnson***	6-3	230	Jr.
RB	3	**Kalif Phillips***	5-10	205	Jr.
WR	10	**Austin Duke***	5-9	160	Jr.
WR	81	**Trent Bostick***	6-0	205	Jr.
WR	84	Juwan Foggie	6-2	190	So.
TE	15	**Justin Bolus***	6-3	220	Jr.
LT	73	**Jamal Covington***	6-4	305	Jr.
LG	68	**Danny Book***	6-6	285	Sr.
C	74	**Thomas La Bianca***	6-3	285	Jr.
RG	50	Jarred Barr	6-3	290	Jr.
RT	70	**Casey Perry***	6-2	325	Jr.

DEFENSE

DE	99	**Brandon Banks***	6-3	280	Jr.
NG	65	**Larry Ogunjobi***	6-3	290	Jr.
DE	96	Devon Johnson	6-3	310	Sr.
LB	11	**Mark Pettit***	6-4	245	Jr.
LB	6	**Karrington King***	5-11	215	So.
LB	42	**Caleb Clayton-Molby***	6-2	235	Sr.
LB	24	Daquan Lucas	5-10	205	Jr.
CB	19	Devin Pearson	5-10	190	Jr.
CB	39	**Anthony Covington***	5-11	195	So.
S	8	**Ardy Holmes***	5-9	190	Sr.
S	3	**Branden Dozier***	6-0	200	Sr.

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	86	**Blake Brewer***	6-1	220	Jr.
P	40	**Arthur Hart***	6-2	185	So.

*Returning starters in Bold

2015 SCHEDULE

Sept. 4	at Georgia State
Sept. 12	PRESBYTERIAN
Sept. 19	at Middle Tennessee
Sept. 26	FAU
Oct. 2	TEMPLE
Oct. 17	at Old Dominion
Oct. 24	SOUTHERN MISS
Oct. 31	MARSHALL
Nov. 7	at FIU
Nov. 14	UTSA
Nov. 21	at Kentucky
Nov. 28	at Rice

2014 RESULTS

W	at Campbell	33-9
W	JOHNSON C. SMITH	56-0
W	at North Carolina Central	40-28
L	at Elon	13-20
L	CHARLESTON SOUTHERN (OT)	41-47
L	at Gardner-Webb	24-27
L	at The Citadel (2OT)	56-63
L	JAMES MADISON	40-48
L	COASTAL CAROLINA	34-59
W	WESLEY COLLEGE	38-33
W	MOREHEAD STATE	52-14

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	38.8	N/A
Rushing	221.9	N/A
Passing	265.0	N/A
Total	486.9	N/A
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**RANK**
Scoring	31.6	N/A
Rushing	193.3	N/A
Passing	284.2	N/A
Total	477.5	N/A
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**RANK**
- 3	- 0.27	N/A

EAST CAROLINA | PIRATES

AAC rank: 7 Record: 8-5 AAC record: 5-3 (T-4th) Stadium: Dowdy-Ficklen (50,000)

PIRATES at a GLANCE

COACH: Ruffin McNeill — At ECU: 37-27, 5 years; overall: 38-27, 6 years
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Dave Nichol
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Rick Smith

LAST LEAGUE TITLE: 2009
LAST TIME DIDN'T GO BOWLING: 2012
RETURNING STARTERS: 13; 6 offense, 6 defense, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH: WR Isaiah Jones, WR Davon Grayson, WR Jimmy Williams, LB Zeek Bigger, CB Josh Hawkins, FS Dominique Lennon, LB Montese Overton, DE Johnathon White

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: As offensive coordinator Lincoln Riley left for Oklahoma, McNeill promoted Dave Nichol to that position. This should be a key in establishing continuity with so many position openings on offense. ECU has possibly its deepest roster in the McNeill regime, even after replacing half the starters.
POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: The pass-catch firepower of Shane Carden to Justin Hardy won't be easily, or quickly, replaced. The schedule is challenging, too, with road trips to Florida and BYU, as well as a home date with Virginia Tech, in addition to the AAC opponents.

JOSH HAWKINS
Photo by Jeremy Brevard-USA TODAY Sports

OFFENSE

There is a three-player battle to replace record-setting quarterback Shane Carden, while several wide receiver battles will determine the order at this deep position.

Sophomore Kurt Benkert had an edge over juniors Blake Kemp and Cody Keith to replace Carden coming out of spring football. Benkert is a drop-back quarterback whose touch and agility will allow him to solidify the job.

Justin Hardy and Cam Worthy finished impressive careers, thinning the production at wide receiver. Isaiah Jones caught 81 passes for 830 yards a year ago and looks to be the primary option this time around. Davon Grayson and Jimmy Williams can be big-time playmakers, as well.

Chris Hairston is the prime candidate to replace Breon Allen in the backfield. He stepped up to lead the Pirates in rushing in two of their last three games, and he also had a 153-yard effort against Tulane. The Pirates return three seniors — Ike Harris, Quincy McKinney and Dontae Levingston — on a deep offensive line.

DEFENSE

The defense has improved steadily in coach Ruffin McNeill's six years, and it was outstanding against the run and on third down last season.

Linebacker is the team's defensive strength, with Zeek Bigger and Montese Overton returning as East Carolina's leading and third-leading tacklers. Bigger, All-AAC a year ago, will man the inside while Overton, who had 11.5 tackles for loss in 2014, starts outside. Improving Joe Allely, Reece Speight and Jordan Adams can step into other openings.

ECU loses playmakers Detric Allen and Lamar Ivey in the secondary. Cornerback Josh Hawkins, a 2014 Jim Thorpe Award finalist, and free safety Domonique Lennon will be the leaders of that unit. A key contributor will be Rocco Scarfone, who will start opposite of Hawkins. In his first start against Florida, he had 11 tackles.

Johnathon White is the only returnee for ECU on the front three, where he will be joined by Terrell Stanley, a key contributor two years ago, who returns after complications from an auto accident. Fred Presley will also figure into the mix as he led ECU with six sacks.

> "He reminds me of all the quarterbacks I've been watching for 16 years in this offense. ... Kurt is going to be fine."
> — Ruffin McNeill on Kurt Benkert

SPECIAL TEAMS

Worth Gregory gives the Pirates stability at punter. He averaged 43.6 yards per attempt last season. The kicking game is open with Davis Plowman expected to take over for Warren Harvey.

Replacing Hardy in the return game won't be easy, but a plethora of speedy Pirates will continue to try through fall camp. Hardy was a dynamic return specialist, so this is a key area to fill with the depth on the roster.

OVERVIEW

At 8-5, East Carolina had a successful AAC debut as the Pirates tied for second, although they lost to Florida in the Birmingham Bowl. It looks like a rebuilding year in Greenville with so many positions open due to graduation. Good news: Depth all over the roster is at its height in McNeill's sixth year, and growing pains might be kept to a minimum.

— Ken Cross

TOP NEWCOMER

WR Deondre Farrier: He is a big-play receiver who de-committed from Florida. Farrier runs a 4.48-second 40 and should fit immediately into a rebuilding offense. He averaged 15.9 yards per catch for Lake Nona High School in Orlando, Fla.

2015 PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	6	Kurt Benkert	6-3	220	So.
RB	22	Chris Hairston	6-0	205	Sr.
WR	87	Terrell Green	6-4	209	So.
WR	**7**	**Isaiah Jones***	**6-1**	**197**	**Jr.**
WR	**85**	**Davon Grayson***	**6-2**	**195**	**Jr.**
TE	80	Bryce Williams	6-6	258	Sr.
LT	**69**	**Ike Harris***	**6-7**	**309**	**Sr.**
LG	**72**	**Quincy McKinney***	**6-4**	**288**	**Sr.**
C	**65**	**J.T. Boyd***	**6-4**	**298**	**Jr.**
RG	55	Larry Williams	6-4	331	So.
RT	**71**	**Dontae Levingston***	**6-4**	**306**	**Sr.**

DEFENSE

DE	66	Terrell Stanley	6-2	268	Sr.
NT	56	Demetri McGill	6-1	314	Jr.
DE	**94**	**Johnathon White***	**6-4**	**282**	**Sr.**
LB	**51**	**Montese Overton***	**6-3**	**221**	**Sr.**
LB	**44**	**Zeek Bigger***	**6-2**	**216**	**Sr.**
LB	**45**	**Jordan Williams***	**6-0**	**230**	**So.**
LB	57	Joe Allely	6-1	230	So.
CB	**28**	**Josh Hawkins***	**5-10**	**185**	**Sr.**
CB	10	Rocco Scarfone	5-11	178	Sr.
SS	22	Terrell Richardson	6-0	211	Jr.
FS	**31**	**Domonique Lennon***	**6-2**	**210**	**Sr.**

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	38	Davis Plowman	5-10	204	Jr.
P	**40**	**Worth Gregory***	**6-3**	**209**	**Jr.**

*Returning starters in Bold

2015 SCHEDULE

Sept. 5	TOWSON
Sept. 12	at Florida
Sept. 19	at Navy
Sept. 26	VIRGINIA TECH
Oct. 3	at SMU
Oct. 10	at BYU
Oct. 17	TULSA
Oct. 22	TEMPLE
Oct. 30	at Connecticut
Nov. 7	SOUTH FLORIDA
Nov. 19	at UCF
Nov. 28	CINCINNATI

2014 RESULTS

W	NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL	52-7
L	at South Carolina	23-33
W	at Virginia Tech	28-21
W	NORTH CAROLINA	70-41
W	SMU	45-24
W	at South Florida	28-17
W	CONNECTICUT	31-21
L	at Temple	10-20
L	at Cincinnati	46-54
W	TULANE	34-6
W	at Tulsa	49-32
L	UCF	30-32
	Birmingham Bowl	
L	vs. Florida	20-28

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	35.8	T-22
Rushing	161.1	64
Passing	371.9	3
Total	533.0	5
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**RANK**
Scoring	25.8	53
Rushing	111.8	11
Passing	255.5	98
Total	367.3	37
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**RANK**
- 4	- 0.31	T-89

MARSHALL | THUNDERING HERD

C-USA rank: 2 Record: 13-1 C-USA record: 7-1 (1st, East) Stadium: Joan C. Edwards Stadium (38,016)

THUNDERING HERD at a GLANCE

LOCATION: Huntington, W.Va.
COACH: Doc Holliday — At Marshall and overall: 40-25, 5 years
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Bill Legg
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Chuck Heater

RETURNING STARTERS: 12; 6 offense, 5 defense, punter
LAST LEAGUE TITLE: 2014
LAST TIME DIDN'T GO BOWLING: 2012

PLAYERS TO WATCH: QB Michael Birdsong, RB Devon Johnson, WR Deon-Tay McManus, OL Clint Van Horn, LB Evan McKelvey, CB Corey Tindal, S Taj Letman, S A.J. Leggett

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: Johnson is a juggernaut at running back and should be the focal point of Marshall's offense. Some dynamic receivers will help new quarterback Birdsong get comfortable. So many defensive backs returning should make it tough for teams to pass on the Herd.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: How will Marshall's offense run without QB Rakeem Cato, who knew the scheme like the back of his hand after four years as a starter? The Herd's departures on the defensive line could hurt, especially James Rouse. He was so disruptive, drawing double- and triple-teams, that it allowed the rest of the line freedom to create chaos.

OFFENSE

The defending Conference USA champions must replace their career leader in nearly every major passing category, their career leader in receptions and the league's top defensive player.

Still, the Thundering Herd's cupboard isn't bare.

Marshall returns running back Devon Johnson, who rumbled his way to 1,767 yards, 17 touchdowns and a spot on the 2014 Doak Walker Award semifinalist list. Top backup Steward Butler, who rushed for 798 yards and seven scores, was kicked off the team in May.

Top receiver Tommy Shuler (322 catches, fourth all-time nationally) is gone, but Deon-Tay McManus and Angelo Jean-Louis are back after strong freshman seasons. Three starting offensive linemen return, led by all-conference first-team tackle Clint Van Horn.

That should help new starting quarterback Michael Birdsong — Herd coach Doc Holliday anointed him No. 1 two days after spring ball ended — handle the pressure of replacing the decorated Rakeem Cato. Birdsong has 14 games of starting experience at the FCS level, playing two years at James Madison before transferring to Marshall.

DEFENSE

Three of four defensive line starters from last year, including All-C-USA first-teamer James Rouse, are gone. Only tackle Jarquez Samuel returns. The Herd also said goodbye to two key linebackers — conference Defensive Player of the Year Neville Hewitt and All-C-USA second-teamer Jermaine Holmes.

Most of the secondary is back for 2015, but all-conference first-team corner Darryl Roberts, who broke up 17 passes and intercepted another last season, isn't one of them.

Defensive end Gary Thompson, a former C-USA All-Freshman pick who battled injuries last year, will try to help Samuel anchor the defensive front, along with redshirt sophomore end Blake Keller, who transferred from UCF last season. Another transfer, former Maryland linebacker Shawn Petty, will contribute to that unit.

DEVON JOHNSON
Photo by Michael Shroyer-USA TODAY Sports

"Our guys have a lot of confidence and feel good about themselves, but they understand hard work got us to where we are."

— Doc Holliday

Marshall's linebackers also welcome back Evan McKelvey, who missed most of 2014 to his second season-ending knee injury.

Corey Tindal, Antavis Rowe and Keith Baxter all come back to lead the Herd's cornerbacks. Marshall's starting safeties, A.J. Leggett and Taj Letman, combined for eight interceptions last season.

SPECIAL TEAMS

All-conference punter Tyler Williams enters his fourth year as Marshall's starter. The Herd will feature a new place-kicker, as Justin Haig graduated. Nick Smith entered the spring as the No. 1, but he got a strong challenge from kickoff specialist Amoreto Curraj, who missed last season with bulging discs in his back.

Explosive kick returner Deandre Reaves is back, and Hyleck Foster should step into Tommy Shuler's shoes on punt returns.

OVERVIEW

Marshall's returning cast is strong enough to contend for another Conference USA crown, but there are enough key roles to replace that the Herd won't be the favorite. Marshall's regular-season finale at Western Kentucky — the team that knocked it from the unbeaten ranks last year in a wild overtime game — could very well decide the East Division.

— Derek Redd

TOP NEWCOMER

QB Michael Birdsong: The James Madison transfer is replacing Marshall's career leader in most major passing categories, four-year starter Rakeem Cato. Birdsong has a good bank of starting experience from JMU and a strong arm that should make the Herd's talented wide receivers happy.

2015 PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	11	Michael Birdsong	6-5	242	Jr.
RB	**47**	**Devon Johnson***	**6-1**	**243**	**Sr.**
WR	2	Hyleck Foster	5-10	191	So.
WR	**3**	**Davonte Allen***	**6-2**	**201**	**Sr.**
WR	16	Deon-Tay McManus	6-2	228	So.
TE	85	Ryan Yurachek	6-3	231	So.
LT	67	Sandley Jean-Felix	6-5	309	So.
LG	**71**	**Sebastian Johansson***	**6-5**	**277**	**Sr.**
C	**54**	**Michael Selby***	**6-2**	**276**	**Jr.**
RG	65	Cody Collins	6-1	283	So.
RT	**78**	**Clint Van Horn***	**6-5**	**295**	**Sr.**

DEFENSE

DE	73	Joe Massaquoi	6-5	254	Jr.
DT	**94**	**Jarquez Samuel***	**6-4**	**290**	**Sr.**
DT	93	Steve Dillon	6-4	278	Sr.
DE	59	Gary Thompson	6-1	258	Jr.
LB	**22**	**D.J. Hunter***	**6-0**	**209**	**Sr.**
LB	45	Raheim Huskey	6-2	218	So.
LB	31	Evan McKelvey	6-2	213	Sr.
CB	**10**	**Corey Tindal***	**5-9**	**183**	**Jr.**
CB	5	Keith Baxter	6-0	195	Sr.
S	**1**	**A.J. Leggett***	**6-0**	**198**	**Jr.**
S	**17**	**Taj Letman***	**6-2**	**189**	**Sr.**

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	48	Nick Smith	5-10	168	So.
P	**38**	**Tyler Williams***	**6-0**	**200**	**Sr.**

*Returning starters in Bold

2015 SCHEDULE

Sept. 6	PURDUE
Sept. 12	at Ohio
Sept. 19	NORFOLK STATE
Sept. 26	at Kent State
Oct. 3	OLD DOMINION
Oct. 10	SOUTHERN MISS
Oct. 17	at FAU
Oct. 24	NORTH TEXAS
Oct. 31	at Charlotte
Nov. 7	at Middle Tennessee
Nov. 14	FIU
Nov. 28	at Western Kentucky

2014 RESULTS

W	at Miami (OH)	42-27
W	RHODE ISLAND	48-7
W	OHIO	44-14
W	at Akron	48-17
W	at Old Dominion	56-14
W	MIDDLE TENNESSEE	49-24
W	at FIU	45-13
W	FAU	35-16
W	at Southern Miss	63-17
W	RICE	41-14
W	at UAB	23-18
L	WESTERN KENTUCKY (OT)	66-67
	C-USA Championship Game	
W	vs. Louisiana Tech	26-23
	Boca Raton Bowl	
W	vs. Northern Illinois	52-23

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	45.6	3
Rushing	271.9	7
Passing	287.3	17
Total	559.2	2
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**RANK**
Scoring	21.0	18
Rushing	160.2	53
Passing	196.9	23
Total	357.1	31
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**RANK**
- 2	- 0.14	T-71

OLD DOMINION | MONARCHS

C-USA rank: 8 Record: 6-6 overall C-USA: 4-4 (T-3rd, East) Stadium: Foreman Field (20,118)

MONARCHS at a GLANCE

LOCATION: Norfolk, Va.
COACH: Bobby Wilder: At ODU and overall: 52-20, 6 years
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Brian Scott
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Rich Nagy

LAST LEAGUE TITLE: None
LAST BOWL: None
RETURNING STARTERS: 16; 8 offense, 6 defense, kicker, punter

PLAYERS TO WATCH: QB Shuler Bentley, RB Ray Lawry, WR David Washington, OT Connor Mewbourne, DT Rashaad Coward, LB T.J. Ricks, CB Devon Brown, S Fellonte Misher

PRIMARY STRENGTHS: Lawry ran for 947 yards as a true freshman, even though he hardly played in the first five games. He is a powerful runner with great breakaway speed. Bentley won the quarterback position in spring practice with a strong performance. Washington, a converted quarterback, is a potential all-conference receiver. Coward has NFL potential and had a good offseason.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS: This will be one of the youngest teams in the nation. There are only 10 seniors, and more than half of the 105 players who will report to preseason camp have never played in a college football game. Last year's team was poised — the Monarchs won four games on the final play of the game — but such fortune and composure isn't likely to repeat itself.

RAY LAWRY
Photo by AP Photo/The News & Observer, Ethan Hyman

"We're a very young team, but I like the camaraderie in our locker room. That will help us when we experience the growing pains we're going to face."
— Coach Bobby Wilder

OFFENSE

Employing an Oregon-like spread offense, Old Dominion has been a wide-open, up-tempo scoring machine over the past four seasons, even as it moved up from the Football Championship Subdivision to the Football Bowl Subdivision.

But Taylor Heinicke, a four-year starter who passed for 14,959 yards, sixth most in Division I history, is gone. ODU also loses key starters in wide receiver Antonio Vaughan, the school's career pass-receiving leader, and center Josh Mann. Both were All-Conference USA.

Heinicke will be replaced with promising redshirt freshman Shuler Bentley as the offense is changing to a more ground-oriented attack. Expect ODU to feature tailback Ray Lawry, the Conference USA Rookie of the Year last season, as its go-to offensive player. ODU will at times use more traditional formations, including a tight end — something rarely seen during Heinicke's four seasons.

The line, led by senior tackle Connor Mewbourne, has its best depth in seven seasons of ODU football. Mason Halter, a 6-8, 300-pound two-time FCS All-American at Fordham, is slated to transfer to ODU this summer and likely will start.

Most of the receivers are back, including Blair Roberts, who missed last season because of a back injury; he is one of the school's career receiving leaders. David Washington and Zach Pascal combined for 106 catches for 1,342 yards and 11 touchdowns last year.

DEFENSE

The defense, woeful for much of the past three seasons, showed signs of improvement in the final three games of 2014, all victories.

Yet, the defense is young. Of the 16 defensive backs, 11 are underclassmen; seven of the 15 defensive linemen are freshmen or redshirt freshmen.

ODU had little pass rush last year and just five interceptions. Redshirt freshmen ends Daniel Appouh and Oshane Ximines, both three-star recruits, could help apply pressure.

ODU has quality defensive tackles in Rashaad Coward, Bunmi Rotimi and Galen Evans.

Depth at linebacker has been an issue in recent years. Middle linebacker T.J. Ricks, a former walk-on, was ODU's best tackler in spring practice.

Help in the secondary comes from UAB transfer cornerback Devon Brown, who won a starting position in the spring.

SPECIAL TEAMS

ODU struggled at times on special teams last season, especially on kickoff returns and coverage. Ricky Segers returns at place-kicker, although he is coming off knee surgery. Jarrett Cervi or Satchel Ziffer likely will punt. Redshirt freshman Isaiah Harper, a 5-8 former track star, is likely to return punts and kickoffs.

OVERVIEW

ODU finished 6-6 in its first FBS season and appears to have a more favorable schedule. The Monarchs have seven home games, and their only game against a power conference team — NC State — will be played in Norfolk. The Conference USA schedule is less challenging — last season the Monarchs were on the road for five weeks, including two trips to Texas in the same month. This is a young team with major holes to fill, yet six victories is a reasonable goal.

— Harry Minium

TOP NEWCOMER

QB Shuler Bentley: The redshirt freshman was a two-time South Carolina Gatorade Player of the Year who passed for 13,245 yards and 177 touchdowns in three seasons at Byrnes High in Duncan. Bentley ran a spread offense in high school similar to ODU's and soaked in all he could last season while redshirting behind Taylor Heinicke.

2015 PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	19	Shuler Bentley	6-1	209	Fr.
RB	33	**Ray Lawry***	5-10	205	So.
WR	6	**Zach Pascal***	6-2	217	Jr.
WR	10	**David Washington***	6-3	209	Jr.
WR	2	Marques Little	5-9	180	So.
WR	1	Melvin Vaughn	6-2	248	Jr.
LT	71	**Connor Mewbourne***	6-4	287	Sr.
LG	70	**Tyler Fisher***	6-4	323	Jr.
C	66	**Troy Butler***	6-3	320	Jr.
RG	65	**Tyler Burns***	6-6	370	Sr.
RT	78	**Darius Garcia***	6-3	311	So.

DEFENSE

DE	95	**Poncho Barnwell***	6-4	270	So.
NT	57	**Rashaad Coward***	6-6	297	Jr.
DT	58	Bunmi Rotimi	6-4	283	So.
DE	96	**Terrell Reid***	6-2	277	Jr.
LB	45	Shadow Williams	6-0	218	Jr.
LB	47	**T.J. Ricks***	6-0	226	Jr.
LB	36	**Martez Simpson***	6-1	222	Sr.
CB	14	Aquante Thornton	5-9	170	Sr.
CB	19	Devon Brown	5-11	180	Jr.
SS	24	**Fellonte Misher***	6-2	214	Sr.
FS	13	Justice Davila	6-0	191	So.

SPECIAL TEAMS

K	38	**Ricky Segers***	6-2	202	Jr.
P	39	**Jarrett Cervi***	6-1	219	So.

*Returning starters in Bold

2015 SCHEDULE

Sept. 5	at Eastern Michigan
Sept. 12	NORFOLK STATE
Sept. 19	NC STATE
Sept. 26	APPALACHIAN STATE
Oct. 3	at Marshall
Oct. 17	CHARLOTTE
Oct. 24	at FIU
Oct. 31	WESTERN KENTUCKY
Nov. 7	at UTSA
Nov. 14	UTEP
Nov. 21	at Southern Miss
Nov. 28	FAU

2014 RESULTS

W	HAMPTON	41-28
L	at NC State	34-46
W	EASTERN MICHIGAN	17-3
W	at Rice	45-42
L	MIDDLE TENNESSEE	28-41
L	MARSHALL	14-56
L	at UTEP	35-42
L	at Western Kentucky	51-66
L	at Vanderbilt	28-42
W	FIU	38-35
W	LOUISIANA TECH (OT)	30-27
W	at FAU	31-28

2014 RANKINGS

OFFENSE	PER GAME	RANK
Scoring	32.7	N/A
Rushing	149.4	N/A
Passing	292.5	N/A
Total	441.9	N/A
DEFENSE	**PER GAME**	**RANK**
Scoring	38.0	N/A
Rushing	222.5	N/A
Passing	229.7	N/A
Total	452.2	N/A
TO MARGIN	**PER GAME**	**RANK**
- 1	- 0.08	N/A

KEEPING *the* FAITH

BY LYN SCARBROUGH

SHERRI GRAVES SMITH

Saturdays were special in Sherri Graves Smith's home.

"When I was 3 years old, my family moved from Panama City to my parents' hometown of Tuscumbia, Ala.," Sherri remembered. "Saturdays were special days when I was growing up. We watched football games as an entire family. My mother made snacks and tailgate food and we enjoyed each other's company. That togetherness made me a fan."

"Of course, living in north Alabama influenced my love of college sports. You cannot escape the big rivalry between Alabama and Auburn."

As a young girl, Sherri could not have known how her love of college sports would so profoundly impact her life as an adult. She graduated from the University of Alabama and was moving up in a successful business career.

"I was only 36 years old, an attorney with the Coca-Cola Company and I was being considered for a position in Vienna, Austria," she said. "My stomach had been bothering me, so I went to the doctor for a check-up. I was informed that I had cancer. There was no family history. I was in absolute and utter disbelief."

It was Stage IV colorectal cancer.

It was 2007 and she started with chemotherapy and radiation treatments at Atlanta Cancer Care. Her fast track career path had been slowed down. Her life had been thrown a detour.

"I had 30 days of chemo and radiation," she recalled. "I had two surgeries, including one to remove the tumor. Then, I had six months of chemo where I would infuse every two weeks at the cancer center."

While undergoing that treatment, lifelong friend, Chuck Smith, was one of her primary caregivers. That relationship blossomed and they were married one year to the day after her cancer diagnosis. After a honeymoon, Sherri went back to her job, but shortly after returning, she found out that the cancer had spread to both lungs. Even more severe treatment started.

"I went to the center every two weeks and wore a chemo pump for 46 hours," she said. "That was too difficult. I would end up in the emergency room or hospital each time that I had chemo, so the doctor changed the regimen — chemo every Monday and chemo pills for four days. I did that for a little over four years."

It was during that time when Sherri's love for college football impacted her new life in a way that she could never have imagined. And, it was a horrible, illegal act that made it happen.

Auburn is Alabama's biggest rival and those teams usually compete for conference and national titles. Rolling Toomer's Corner, the throwing of toilet paper into tall oaks in the center of town, is an Auburn tradition after significant wins. The Tigers defeated the Crimson Tide in 2010 and were national champions. One renegade Bama fan didn't take that well. He administered a lethal dose of poison to the ancient trees.

"I was mortified and embarrassed," Sherri said. "When I was a little girl, my father talked to me about being dignified, handling disappointments with class, and taking the high road. So when the poisoning happened, I was disappointed and hurt.

"I was a few years into treatments for Stage IV cancer then, fighting for my life on a daily basis. That deeply impacted the way I look at things. Traditions and memories are important. Life is fleeting and moments should be cherished.

"I was disturbed about the example it set for children. I wanted to find a way to teach good sportsmanship and manners without being heavy-handed. So, I thought about what if a team mascot takes a child on a game day and teaches those things."

Sherri decided to produce children's books with that theme, starting with Alabama, Auburn, Georgia and Georgia Tech.

"Absolutely not, I didn't expect what happened next," she admitted. "People started asking for books for more schools. I now have over 50 schools, two Major League Baseball teams, and the Dallas Mavericks. I've also started an alphabet and counting series where I've taken football facts and school traditions, and made them rhyme."

Her books are available nationally and her work is acclaimed. She has been active in fundraising for cancer research and in 2013 received the Survivor's Circle Award from the American Cancer Society of Radiation Oncology for her work in the cancer community.

Despite how her business has exploded, her original goals with the project were simple.

"I was in my third year of treatment and wanted to do something positive with my life," she explained. "More than anything, I wanted to make a child learn positive messages and have fun in the process.

"My parents read to me as a child every night. I saw a woman on television reading one of my books to her child, and I welled up with tears. The thought that people are reading to the children and building memories gives me such joy. I hope that the lessons help them now, but will also stay with them as adults."

Sherri gives much credit for her success to her husband, parents and other family members.

"My husband helps me emotionally and physically," she said. "It has been hard going through things like losing my hair and not being able to do simple things, but he remains faithful."

Sherri's parents, married for 56 years, have been her example. Her father, an 88-year old retired Air Force veteran, still owns two funeral homes and has a Sunday morning radio show where he plays gospel music, gives funeral announcements, and even teaches Sunday School if bad weather makes church attendance difficult for the audience.

"I don't remember a time when prayer and Christ were not a part of my upbringing," she said. "It wasn't just going to church or Bible class. Lessons were instilled about being of service, knowing Scriptures and having respect and reverence for God. We prayed together as a family. Living in a Christ-centered household was, and still is, very important.

"I know that for all intents and purposes, I should not still be here. There were times that I have gone to sleep sure that I was going to pass on and I was surprised when I awakened. So many people have been praying for me and I have placed my faith in Him to carry me through."

To find out more about Sherri Graves Smith's books, go to www.gamedayrules.com.

Sherri and Chuck Smith with the first two books.

Mike Garrett 1965 Heisman Winner
Photo by Malcolm Emmons-USA TODAY Sports

A Look BACK

5 YEARS AGO: 2010

Virginia Tech experienced a ridiculous roller-coaster ride in 2010. The Hokies opened ranked in the Top 10, only to be beaten by Boise State in Game 1. They had only five days to get over the hangover of disappointment — and apparently they didn't — and they were beaten by lower-division James Madison. Of course, they were panned as the most overrated team in the country ... until they weren't. Tech rebounded to show its quality and won 10 consecutive games, capped by a 44-33 victory over Florida State in the ACC title game. The dream season ended with a loss to Stanford in the Orange Bowl, but the dizzying three months were memorable enough.

ACC Champion: Virginia Tech (11-3, 8-0)

ACC Player of the Year: Tyrod Taylor, QB, Virginia Tech

Heisman Trophy: Cam Newton, QB, Auburn (no ACC player in top 10)

National Champion: Cam Newton led No. 1 Auburn on a 73-yard field goal drive in the last two minutes (Wes Byrum won it with a chip shot as time expired) to lift the Tigers over Oregon in the BCS Championship Game.

10 YEARS AGO: 2005

The first year of the 12-team ACC showed that it would not be business as usual. The teams beat up on each other and, as a result of the parity, eight teams played in bowls. Virginia Tech and Florida State took circuitous routes to their division titles. After FSU was beaten by Virginia, the Seminoles later lost to NC State and Clemson in consecutive weeks, but they won the Atlantic thanks to a head-to-head tiebreaker over Boston College. Virginia Tech, meantime, went 8-0 before losing to Miami ... which then promptly lost to Georgia Tech, enabling the Hokies to jump back into the championship game. Even the title game was bizarre, as Bobby Bowden's club took a 27-3 lead into the fourth quarter, only to be fortunate to hang on for a 27-22 victory.

ACC Champion: Florida State (8-5, 5-3)

ACC Player of the Year: Chris Barclay, RB, Wake Forest

Heisman Trophy: Reggie Bush, RB, USC (no ACC player in top 10)

National Champion: Vince Young carried Texas on his back throughout the Rose Bowl and then into the end zone in the final minute to beat top-ranked USC, 41-38.

15 YEARS AGO: 2000

Florida State won its eighth consecutive ACC championship (it shared the title twice, but still snagged the big bowl via tiebreaker), outscoring its conference brethren by an average of 40-11. Chris Weinke won the Heisman Trophy, narrowly outpolling Oklahoma's Josh Heupel. But just as it seemed as if the Seminoles were on their way to a third national championship, Weinke's favorite receiver, Marvin Minnis, was declared ineligible for the BCS showdown in the Orange Bowl. Oklahoma promptly smashed Weinke and FSU in a stunningly defensive battle.

ACC Champion: Florida State (11-2, 8-0)

ACC Player of the Year: Chris Weinke, QB, Florida State

Heisman Trophy: Chris Weinke, QB, Florida State (no other ACC player in top 10)

National Champion: Even though Oklahoma had the nation's best defense and Heisman runner-up Josh Heupel leading the offense, FSU was a 10-point favorite in the Orange Bowl. Then OU did a number on Weinke, smothering FSU, 13-2.

20 YEARS AGO: 1995

Virginia finally showed that the rest of the league was beginning to catch up with Florida State. The Cavs beat the Seminoles, 33-28, in one of the most memorable games in league history, ending FSU's 29-game conference winning streak. OK, so the Seminoles still won the league's tiebreaker because they were ranked higher in the polls, but it was a major morale boost for the rest of the ACC. With FSU beating Notre Dame in the Orange, Virginia beating Georgia, and North Carolina beating Arkansas, the bowl season showed the league was on the rise.

ACC Co-Champions: Florida State (10-2, 7-1), Virginia (9-4, 7-1)

ACC Player of the Year: Danny Kanell, QB, Florida State

Heisman Trophy: Eddie George, RB, Ohio State (9th — Warrick Dunn, RB, FSU)

National Champion: Nebraska (13-0) blew away Florida in a stunning Fiesta Bowl, 62-24, in a showdown of undefeated teams ranked Nos. 1 and 2. The no-doubt-about-it rout cemented the legacy of the Cornhuskers' second straight national title.

25 YEARS AGO: 1990

Georgia Tech started the season unranked, and then watched poll darlings Miami, Notre Dame, Colorado and Washington fall from the ranks of the undefeated. A wild 41-38 victory over top-ranked Virginia opened the nation's eyes in late October, and by the end, the Yellow Jackets were the only major team with a zero in the loss column. For that, voters in the coaches poll rewarded Bobby Ross and his club with the ACC's third national championship. Clemson finished strong, and a 30-0 rout of Illinois in the Hall of Fame Bowl boosted the Tigers into the Top 10.

ACC Champion: Georgia Tech (11-0-1, 6-0-1)

ACC Player of the Year: Shawn Moore, QB, Virginia

Heisman Trophy: Ty Detmer, QB, BYU; (4th — Shawn Moore, QB, Virginia; 6th — Herman Moore, WR, Virginia)

National Champion: Colorado received the AP share of the title, even though the Buffs were 11-1-1 and benefited from the infamous fifth-down play to beat Missouri when game officials lost track of the downs at the MU goal line. The coaches couldn't bring themselves to award the title to CU, so they changed their votes after No. 2 Georgia Tech beat No. 19 Nebraska in the Citrus Bowl, giving Tech half of the title.

50 YEARS AGO: 1965

This is sort of a lost year in ACC football annals. South Carolina won its first-ever league title — but then had four of its conference victories forfeited when an investigation revealed three players received scholarship money while academically ineligible. That gave the co-championship to Clemson and NC State, both of which had been beaten by the Gamecocks. More memorably, this was the season the AP media poll took the first step toward a true national championship. Before 1965, national titles didn't include results of bowl games, but for this season, the AP decided to hold an extra post-bowl poll. When UCLA upset No. 1 Michigan State in the Rose, and LSU knocked off No. 2 Arkansas in the Cotton Bowl, the evening's Orange Bowl would crown No. 3 Nebraska or No. 4 Alabama as national champion.

ACC Co-Champions: NC State (6-4, 5-2), Clemson (5-4, 5-2)

ACC MVP: Danny Talbott, QB, North Carolina

Heisman Trophy: Mike Garrett, RB, Southern California (no ACC player in top 10)

National Champion: Bear Bryant used all of his wiles to upend Bob Devaney's powerful Nebraskans, as Alabama converted two onside kicks in a 39-28 triumph for their third title in five years.

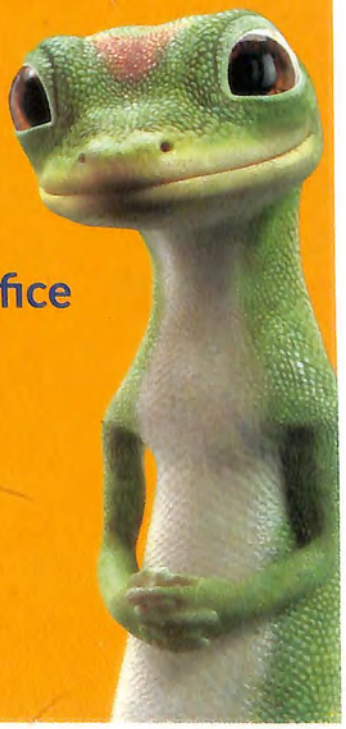
SAVING IS SIMPLE.

GEICO has been saving people money for over 75 years.

GEICO®

Get a quote today.

geico.com | 1-800-947-AUTO | Local Office



Some discounts, coverages, payment plans and features are not available in all states or all GEICO companies.
GEICO is a registered service mark of Government Employees Insurance Company, Washington, D.C. 20076; a Berkshire Hathaway Inc. subsidiary. GEICO Gecko image © 1999-2015. © 2015 GEICO

GAME DAY CHECKLIST:

Bojangles'
Famous Chicken 'n Biscuits

- ✔ Visit Local Bojangles'!
- ✔ Grab a Big Bo Box!
- ✔ Tailgate Success!

www.Bojangles.com

Join the Bojangles' Team @ bojangles.com